

which began at the end of 1945, did not at all pursue the goal of renewing personnel: the leader deprived the power structures of even the theoretical opportunity to realize the political capital that they had earned in the battle against fascism.

The military, who escaped direct repression, fell into disgrace. In the leadership of the armed forces, Marshal Zhukov, Admiral Kuznetsov and other prominent military leaders were replaced by either narrow departmental professionals, such as Marshal Vasilevsky, or colorless party and economic functionaries-executors - the newly-minted Marshal Bulganin. In early 1946, the post of Minister of State Security instead of Merkulov was taken by a new Stalinist nominee, the former head of military counterintelligence SMERSH Abakumov. Marshal Beria was completely removed from overseeing the special services, although he was left in charge of the Soviet atomic program.

Post-war repressions in the security agencies

The post-war period of Stalin's activity laid the foundation for the complication of the mechanism for managing the economy and the socio-political sphere. Entire directions, new branches of the national economy were created. The aggravation of the struggle between Stalin's associates resulted in new repressions and the defeat of some "anti-party groups" (for example, the "Leningrad affair"). As a result, a case is being fabricated against Minister Abakumov himself about a conspiracy by the MGB against the country's leadership. So, the secret services again found themselves under fire not only from the Boss, but also from various factions in the Politburo and the Secretariat of the Central

Committee of the party. The "Abakumov case" and the "Zionist conspiracy in the MGB" tied to it, the background for which was the anti-Semitic campaign, is the apotheosis of political squabbles on the eve of Stalin's death. In the spring of 1953, Beria, who was put at the helm of the Lubyanka for three months at the head of the expanded Ministry of Internal Affairs, artificial

MGB. After all, the doctors were filed with the conspiracy only as a tool with which Abakumov allegedly prepared the seizure of power.

Everything that could somehow whitewash Viktor Abakumov did not suit either Beria, or Khrushchev, or others who dealt with this matter - up to the commission from Staraya Square, headed by M.S. Solomentsev, and at the end of perestroika - A. N. Yakovlev. Only very recently did it become documented about the commission on judicial issues that existed in the depths of the Politburo since the 1930s. The repressive measures carried out by the secret services, as well as those aimed against the state security agencies themselves and their nominal leaders, were directed not by a narrow group of secret service curators, but by the entire Politburo. But the last word always belonged to the Boss - Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Gorbachev. In public opinion,

there was a perception close to the truth that intelligence always worked with white gloves and only obtained information, while counterintelligence and investigative agencies carried out repressions. However, the truth is that almost all major political processes were initiated in the Central Committee on the basis of materials obtained by foreign intelligence. Documents from the archives confirm that these operational developments since the 1920s and the affairs of the Industrial Party have foreign primary sources, including signals from agents in Russian émigré circles. The agents supplied information either about anti-Soviet statements or about hostile chatter abroad by Soviet citizens who had quite official contacts with former compatriots who were members of emigre organizations. Often, foreign intelligence services operated through these channels. But the main thing is that the political investigation penetrated over the borders in the direction necessary for the Soviet leadership.

The accusation of trying to become above the party, originally brought against Abakumov, in June 1953 was fully used by Malenkov and Khrushchev when Beria was removed. Each subsequent leader, debunking his predecessor, played on the abolition and revision of cases. Beria's "Hundred Days" in the Ministry of Internal Affairs were marked, among other things, by the rehabilitation of persons close to Malenkov, who were accused under Stalin of condoning the production of low-quality aviation products. Many of

repressed officers, generals and admirals in April and May 1953 were rehabilitated by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR at the suggestion of Beria, who was soon arrested as an enemy of the people. All cases of military conspiracies were stopped, a number of prominent military leaders were returned to their previous work. The alignment with respect to Abakumov, from whom the Politburo was in a hurry to get rid of, turned out to be more difficult.

Khrushchev prevention

The role of the special services as an instrument of the struggle for power was creatively rethought by the new leadership, primarily by Malenkov and Khrushchev. It was Malenkov, the head of the government, who ordered the arrest of Beria on June 26, 1953. When the arrested investigator of the MGB Ryumin began to testify against Ignatiev, the last minister of state security under Stalin, and the name of Malenkov surfaced as one of the co-authors of major political cases, Beria (two weeks before his arrest) sent Malenkov the protocols of these interrogations. The chief of the Ministry of Internal Affairs had the imprudence to recommend to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers to arrest the last Minister of State Security under Stalin, S. Ignatiev, and accuse him of flagrant violations of the law in the "doctors' case." Apparently, this "overflowed the cup": after all, Ignatiev was Malenkov's man. Even under Stalin, Ignatiev was involved in operational affairs to compromise

Beria and became the main target for the latter. Of course, Malenkov was well aware that an attempt to punish Ignatiev would mean knocking out evidence against him, Malenkov. The story of the manipulation of compromising evidence ended with a lightning-fast reprisal against Beria, masked by the mythical accusations of espionage and attempts to seize power against him, although Beria was under the watchful tutelage of his deputies Kruglov and Serov (protéges of Malenkov and Khrushchev).

Since that moment, the scale of the repressive policy has noticeably decreased, but the role of the state security agencies as an instrument of the ruling power has not changed in essence. Khrushchev achieved the appointment of Rudenko as the Prosecutor General of the USSR and through him took into his own hands all the dirt contained in the testimony of Beria on all members of the collective leadership - the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers. Until 1954, when Nikita Khrushchev became the de facto leader of the country, the entire office, investigative materials and special archives were with Malenkov. Kruglov headed the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and Serov - the KGB. Thus, Nikita Sergeevich received all the levers of information-analytical and power control over the country. In the future, it was Serov, who became the chairman of the KGB in 1954, who collected materials for Khrushchev when he launched campaigns against the anti-party group and other actions guides.

Control over the materials of the special services allowed Khrushchev to carry out his famous report at the XX Congress of the CPSU. Without Rudenko and Serov, who carefully selected the necessary documents for the leader, Khrushchev's demarche would have been impossible. The Shvernik Commission did not conduct a real investigation, did not dig deep, especially in the archives of the Central Committee. The main data that Khrushchev operated on were extracted from files stored in the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court, the Military Prosecutor's Office, and also in the secret safes of the KGB.

During Khrushchev's "thaw", the priorities in the policy of the Soviet leadership changed the role of law enforcement agencies. From Khrushchev to Gorbachev, and in the new Russia under Yeltsin, the head of state periodically "prevents" the military departments and special services, showing them "their place." The only difference is that each leader has his own methods, approaches to the placement of personnel, and motives for making decisions. When it came to maintaining personal power in the fight against powerful rivals, Khrushchev personally controlled the secret services. Having defeated the "anti-party group", then removing Marshal Zhukov from the leadership of the Ministry of Defense, Nikita Sergeevich felt out of danger.

At the Plenum of the Central Committee in 1957, Zhukov was even accused of the fact that the special forces groups he created, which met modern requirements, were intended almost to capture the Kremlin. Although

the leadership knew why there was a need for a systematic reform of the "flexible response" troops: after the events in Hungary and the Suez crisis, the political leadership set a planned task for the military to switch to new tactics of airborne assault and reconnaissance and sabotage operations. In any case, all the steps of the military leadership were coordinated with the instructions of the party organs and controlled by the counterintelligence agencies.

Serov tracked all the facts of military dissatisfaction with Khrushchev's reductions in the armed forces, attributing the shortcomings of the position of the Minister of Defense. But Serov, who received the rank of army general "for the elimination of Khrushchev's opponents", was soon moved from the Lubyanka. True, for the prestigious position of head of the GRU. Serov was even for a short time included in the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU, which was very uncharacteristic for that period. After 1958, his services were no longer required. In 1953-1958, Khrushchev was an energetic statesman, personally controlling all the activities of the state security agencies, not entrusting the levers of control to anyone. However, having found himself, in his own way, and not in the Stalinist version, head and shoulders above his colleagues and opponents, he entrusts part of his powers to others, having previously replaced his entire "power" environment, not wanting to depend on those to whom he was indebted his rise to power.

Here Khrushchev makes a fatal mistake for himself. Nominally being the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, including the KGB, he gradually distributes his control functions among the deputies. Under Shelepin at the head of the KGB, a systematic rejuvenation of the Chekist corps begins and the gradual squeezing out of those who, by occupation and level of competence, had information about persons from the new Khrushchev environment. Of course, the cadres were not "cut down", as before, but many employees with 25 years of service were fired from the special services. At the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, the Lubyanka became noticeably younger, having modernized its ideological and political investigation. The work of the KGB, in addition to the fight against espionage and foreign

intelligence agents, the collection of intelligence abroad, as a whole ensured the protection of order, the peace of the state and the security of the country's top leadership. But it was during this period, ceasing to

mass order to smash the opponents of Soviet power, the special services fell into hibernation and weaned to work in a state of emergency. When the winds of Gorbachev's perestroika began to rock the government, it turned out that neither the government nor its transmission belts, represented by the KGB, were ready for real change. The illusion of Stalin's times was preserved: it is enough to have in your hands all the levers of control over the special services - and all tasks will be solved, everything will remain in its place. At the last stage of the Khrushchev decade, new groups began to take shape - Brezhnev, Kosygin, etc. To top it off, Khrushchev appointed the secretary of the Central Committee and the former head of the KGB, Alexander Shelepin, as the curator of the state security organs. Personal control is replaced by control on paper. The conspiracy of the leadership against Khrushchev and the change of leadership excesses.

Power, one might say, legally smoothly passed in October 1964 from hand to hand. There was no talk of a Chekist or military conspiracy - the performers habitually did their job. Within two or three years, the armed forces and special services learned to obey the commands of those people who filmed Khrushchev. The beginning of the Brezhnev era is the

training of his nominees in the Kremlin leadership and special services to prevent further repetitions of the "democratic rotation" of the country's leaders. Pushing Shelepin out of the KGB curatorship, replacing his colleague Semichastny Andropov as head of the KGB was accompanied by rumors about a conspiracy of the "young". Brezhnev needed absolutely his own person. Andropov became such a person. Outwardly calm rule was a kind of synthesis from the experience of

Stalin and Khrushchev. But the colossal efforts of the Lubyanka apparatus were diverted to clearing Brezhnev's entourage in the direction necessary for the leader. With the help of compromising evidence, monitoring by the Chekists of various kinds of chatter among members of the party and military leadership of the USSR, ascertaining the potential danger of certain "plans", a number of major figures were discredited, but this information did not go beyond the walls of the Kremlin. In early 1982, when Andropov became secretary of the Central Committee after Suslov's death, Fedorchuk took over his chair at the Lubyanka. The decrepit General Secretary personally preferred

to control the KGB without entrusting such a delicate function to anyone else. Personally devoted to Brezhnev, General Fedorchuk tried to start an anti-Andropov purge of the state security agencies.

Having become the head of state, Andropov appointed Chebrikov as chairman of the KGB. The Uzbek affair and other anti-corruption campaigns aimed to further shake up the Politburo. The reshuffle in the Moscow party organization was directly linked to the case of the director of the Eliseevsky grocery store, Sokolov. Lubyanka received tacit "orientations" for a certain part of the party leadership. Andropov cleared the ground for his reforms and raised the status of the state security agencies. Gorbachev's perestroika subsequently began on this base.

The last maneuvers of the KGB

Having a huge intelligence apparatus and information and analytical capabilities, the KGB organs under M. Gorbachev in the era of glasnost and perestroika were distracted by activities that were completely unusual for them. For example, to double-check scientific decisions, to work out questions about the composition of participants in certain large projects. Not to mention personnel appointments and revealing sentiments in various sectors of society. Such functions are inherent only to special services in totalitarian states, where the regime of personal power dominates. All the worst that Stalin and his followers laid down in the methods of work of the secret services - the absence of their own political and moral position, the leaders of the Lubyanka keeping track of their place at the Kremlin throne, intolerance towards any opposition - turned out to be strangely demanded and had to be taken to court in the era of the so-called publicity and democratic reforms.

But all the negative information was often not implemented and decisions were postponed, accumulating explosive material. This self-withdrawal of leaders from resolving crisis situations, which began in the era of the rise of Polish Solidarity and partly

aggravated by the Afghan syndrome, revealed the weakness of the political regime in the USSR and its inability to adequately perceive the realities of the time.

The potential of the KGB was used both to decompose the mining movement and to search for compromising evidence against Yeltsin, although often all these Chekist activities seemed to be programmed for the opposite result - discrediting the allied government and social values familiar to most. The farther, the more the competition between the leaders intensified, and not only along the Gorbachev-Yeltsin line. In the face of the inevitable collapse of the country, by entrusting some of his powers to the Union republics, the President of the USSR maneuvered all the time. At the same time, as it became known later, Gorbachev did not at all exclude the use of force in the development of events: the mechanism for using the special services was "lubricated" for actions in a state of emergency. The phenomenon of the State Emergency

Committee was the result of the fact that at the stage of a historical turning point, the state security agencies and law enforcement agencies were headed by people who had not gone through a real school of political activity, who were not accustomed to making responsible decisions on their own. Almost all the "Gekachepists", as if specially selected by Gorbachev for the role of operetta putschists, came to high positions from assistants and referents, from the category of apparatus leaders. Kryuchkov appeared in the leadership of the KGB, brought into the political game personally by Gorbachev. Perhaps the circumstances demanded it.

According to a number of Gorbachev's associates, he was determined to remain in power, but he did not quite clearly imagine the mechanisms for retaining it. The President of the USSR was not accustomed to managing in special, emergency conditions, and therefore moved away from specific work and control over the apparatus. Gorbachev was increasingly involved in representation, acting as a guarantor, a judge over the fight. And the throne

shook. One of the ways out was the use of force within the framework of "democracy". In September 1990, the special services received assignments to work out options for their actions in an

emergency. The plan begins to be embodied in further personnel appointments by presidential decrees. V. Bakatin in the Ministry of Internal Affairs is cha

In the Baltic republican ministries of internal affairs, a "dual power" has already arisen. And for the operational use of the police and the troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on the personal initiative of President M. Gorbachev, General Boris Gromov, who went through Afghanistan, is appointed. Flirting with the opposition, Gorbachev seeks to corrupt it by the methods of the special services. A fundamentally new situation arises. Events seem to be out of control. The January events of 1991 in Vilnius were followed by the departure from the KGB of First Deputy Kryuchkov, one of the best informed about everyone and everything Chekist, the former head of the 5th department of "ideological counterintelligence" F. Bobkov.

In August 1991, when the most acute socio-economic and political crisis reached its greatest extent, the "heirs of Stalin" weaned from independent thinking went to Gorbachev in Foros, as if for mercy to the tsar. Trying to reason with the president, the conspirators report on the implementation of the plans and decisions prepared with his participation. Gorbachev makes a more reasonable choice: realizing that some element of emergency is indispensable, he does not take a definite position, waiting for the drama to unfold. The mythical conspiracies and the true actions

of the leaders of the secret services are not easy to analyze due to the almost complete absence of documents about it. In the light of recent publications and decisions of the justice authorities, the myths about the conspiracies of Yezhov, Beria and Abakumov are more or less amenable to research. The situation is more complicated with the confusing circumstances of the events of August 1991, the dismissal of Security Minister Barannikov in the summer of 1993, and the siege of the White House.

And now the exaggeration in the press of myths about conspiracies in the army, the NKVD KGB is not a harmless invention of a number of falsifications of our history that came out of the Central Committee of the CPSU. This false version, based on speculations around always difficult relations among the leadership of the security agencies, prevented the rehabilitation and restoration of the good name of the innocently injured Chekists, who made a great personal contribution to strengthening the might of the Motherland. Take intelligence leaders. How was the revision of Artuzov's case? Hard. The initial petition for the rehabilitation of Artuzov, one of the organizers of the Soviet counterintelligence, and later intelligence, was postponed due to that

reason that he "was involved in the Yagoda case as a conspirator," and not so much in the Yagoda case as in the case of "a conspiracy in the NKVD." To pull Artuzov out of this category of NKVD conspirators, an appropriate sanction was required in the "instance". Only in 1956 did his relatives begin to be interrogated by the KGB in connection with the review of his case. When the question touched me, German Stepanovich Klimov, head of the CPC Secretariat under the Central Committee of the CPSU, said that my case should be reviewed in the same way as the case of Artuzov, Shpigelglaz. in the leadership of the OGPU. Interest in my comments was caused by a desire to find out how a number of special moments in the relationship between the leaders of intelligence and counterintelligence in the late 20s and early 30s were interpreted by the leaders of the NKVD in the 40s, when the version of the conspiratorial activities of Yagoda and Yezhov received official walking.

Let's go back to these early events. We see an extremely contradictory picture. For example, in 1929 Yagoda and Menzhinsky write a letter to Stalin that they "have nothing to do with the right opposition of Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsy." This letter is not spoken about now, but it was extremely important. All the heads of independent divisions of the OGPU were informed about it. This letter stated that the leadership of the state security had nothing to do with the right-wing opposition, and "all the rumors on this score are pure fiction." But eight years passed, and in the criminal case on the "conspiracy in the NKVD" imaginary connections of Yagoda, Prokofiev, Trilisser, Artuzov with the "right opposition" began to appear. When the CCP introduced me to this letter, I was amazed. After all, none of the investigators and leaders of the NKVD, who replaced Yagoda, Prokofiev, could, with the exception of Yezhov and Stalin, know about this letter. Consequently, it was Stalin and Yezhov who gave instructions to the falsifying investigators to "unwind" the "NKVD conspiracy to secretly support the right opposition." It is difficult to get rid of the idea that Stalin himself was not behind this. Who else could know about the letter from Yagoda, Menzhinsky and Trilisser - the head of intelligence - to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and to the Control Commission addressed to Ordzhonikidze, which reported on a counter-revolutionary Trotskyist le

references to what Bukharin and Sokolnikov said "about the need to change the leadership of the Politburo and that the rightists are supported

by Yagoda and Trilisser." In October 1929, Yagoda wrote to Stalin that there were no disagreements between him and Menzhinsky. "Having arrived and talked with Comrade Menzhinsky," wrote Yagoda, "I was firmly convinced that there was no crack between us, and all my fears in this regard were not based on anything. Now I am very sorry that under the influence of a number of circumstances known to you, I began to doubt Comrade Menzhinsky's attitude towards me and thus left the impression of a crack in the leadership of the OGPU. In fact, there was and is no crack, as I was convinced both from a conversation with Comrade

Menzhinsky and in practical work. Stalin knew perfectly well that relations among the leadership of the state security were abnormal, that there were frictions between the heads of the central departments. This circumstance now forces me to take a fresh look at why Artuzov (after his letter to Menzhinsky in 1931 criticizing Trilisser), after Blumkin was exposed, was appointed to the post of head of the Foreign Department. Then Yagoda, having an unimportant relationship with Artuzov, removes him as well. Interestingly, Artuzov complains about Yagoda in his letter to Menzhinsky, saying "that he has an abnormal relationship with Yagoda"; shortly thereafter, he is transferred to work in the intelligence department of the Red Army. Stalin decided to replace the leadership of the

state security with a completely new generation of people who were not connected with each other, who came through party mobilization. All these circumstances were actively used to plant in the state security agencies the people he needed, who were not connected by past relations with leading Soviet and party workers in the center and on the periphery. There is another letter from Artuzov to Menzhinsky, where he

sharply writes, as I have already said, "about the Trilisser fever," which shook the entire foreign intelligence team. "There were people among us," Artuzov wrote, "who wanted to use the discussion in the fight against Genrikh Grigorievich Yagoda, despite the fact that the very nature of the discussion

was not a Chekist and in itself discredited these people who use unworthy means. The only person who came out with a sharp criticism of the very nature of the discussions was only me, when I protested against self-criticism in operational matters, Comrade Trilisser agreed before that. I urged the party meeting not to try to be more to the left of the Central Committee and continue to consider all materials on opportunist practices in party work.

From this letter dated December 3, 1931, it also follows that Artuzov and INO were involved in cases that are now considered as political repressions in connection with the identification of "foreign connections" in investigative actions in the famous case of co-trial of Professor Ramzin in the case of the Industrial Party and Professor Kondratiev on cause of the so-called Labor Peasant Party.

An impartial investigation of political repressions has always been unprofitable for the country's leadership. And even now it is unlikely that an impartial assessment of these events can take place on the part of such people as A. Yakovlev and V. Naumov - the leaders of the Commission for Political Repressions in the Central Committee of the CPSU and in the current administration. These people are involved in the publication of frankly rigged biographical materials on the victims and participants of political repressions. Moreover, at one time they deliberately concealed important documents not only from the public, but also from the victims of repression. For example, documents stating that the wife of Kirov's killer Nikolaev, Milda Draule, was in Kirov's waiting room at the time of the murder and was detained and interrogated fifteen minutes after his death, were concealed by both the Yakovlev commission and the Shvernik commission back in the 50s. But about the arrest of Draula, the head of the Leningrad NKVD, Medved, who had not yet been removed, reported to Yagoda two hours after the death of Kirov. In the withheld documents, not yet falsified materials of the first day of the investigation, the personal motives for the murder and Nikolaev's undeniable close ties with people who were politically sympathetic to opposition groups to Kirov and Stalin

in the Bolshevik Party are clearly visible. But the personal motives for the murder of Kirov by a jealous husband were unfavorable to both Stalin and Khrushchev, and Gorbachev, and, finally, A. Yakovlev. The latter is concerned with tracing a relatively small number of contract covert liquidations

opponents and opponents of the Stalinist regime, deliberately ignores the wave of political criminal terrorism that has swept over Russia, the victims of which were not only entrepreneurs, but also prominent journalists and a number of public figures. Recently,

a lot has been written about the fact that repressions paralyzed the work of Soviet intelligence. It's right. But the repressions should be understood not only as arrests and judicial reprisals, but also as a periodic purge and renewal of the leadership of the Soviet intelligence agencies. However, now few people think that the repressions in intelligence at the end of the 30s were generated by the departure and flight to the West of a number of senior officials of the INO and the Intelligence Department of the Red Army. The consequences of these escapes were extremely sensitive. Orlov-Nikolsky was not the only defector among the leading workers. In 1937-1938, the former assistant to the head of the INO, the curator of emigration and operations against British intelligence, an illegal resident in Switzerland, M. Steinberg, and his wife, our former operative worker Elsa, remained abroad. Steinberg maintained contact with us through our illegals M. Alakhverdov and G. Takhchianov, but there was no trust in him. Reis, an illegal resident in Western Europe in the 1930s, and

Krivitsky, an illegal resident in Holland, who unfortunately worked both in the INO and in the Red Army Intelligence Agency, embarked on the path of open betrayal. Only one Reis was killed, and Krivitsky, a year before his suicide in Washington, warned, as it was later established, the British and American intelligence services about Soviet agents among Cambridge graduates, in particular about Philby. Fortunately for us, the British did not attach due importance to his signals, because, having fled to the West, he became a mentally unbalanced person. The escape of Lyushkov, the authorized representative of the NKVD for the Far East, also

had grave consequences. He handed over the agents known to him in Manchuria. Thus, the escapes also paralyzed our work, they also provoked repressions,

accelerated the fall of Yezhov, but, unfortunately, they became a strong argument for Stalin, who had ceased to trust the employees of the intelligence apparatus, especially his

management, which gave positive assessments to the work of Orlov Nikolsky, Krivitsky and others.

The escapes of 1937-1939 are consonant with the treacherous escapes of Soviet and Russian intelligence officers in the 1980s-1990s. It is impossible to justify the current traitors with the threat of political reprisals. But, unfortunately, V. Kirpichenko, as the head of works on the history of intelligence, and employees of the press bureau of foreign intelligence O. Tsarev and others seek to justify the escapes of the 30s with the threat of repression. At the same time, V. Kirpichenko claims that there were no repressions in intelligence after the debunking of Stalin. But this is a deliberate lie. The intelligence leadership, even after the XX Congress of the CPSU, prevented the rehabilitation of Serebryansky until 1971, "because it was not possible to find the workers' case of Serebryansky and establish what benefit he brought to Soviet intelligence," according to her conclusion, "it was not possible."

Foreign intelligence and the Intelligence Department of the General Staff look unattractive in the judicial reprisal against illegal A. Gurevich in 1958, who was rehabilitated, despite the opposition of military intelligence,

in 1990, M. Steinberg, together with his wife, was convicted on the initiative of foreign intelligence upon returning home, despite assurances by intelligence officials not to prosecute him in 1957. He was judged secretly, without a defender. The verdict states that "it is not advisable to apply capital punishment to him due to the absence of actual damage from his activities." Nevertheless, he was sentenced to 12 years in prison, and his wife Elsa was sentenced to five years under Article 58. Elsa was not guilty at all, since she carried out his orders as a subordinate employee. I am hostile to Steinberg, I had a conflict with him in prison, but his case was falsified, and the intelligence leadership knew about this, each time sending negative conclusions on his statements to Khrushchev (in the 60s) and to the prosecutor's office. Finally, an even more

outrageous example regarding the whole family of illegal immigrants Markovs. They were captured by the Americans in Argentina in the 1970s in connection, as they say, with the betrayal of O. Gordievsky. In relation to them, the intelligence leadership and the chairman of the KGB, Yu. Andropov, carried out an act of egregious

political arbitrariness - extrajudicial repressive expulsion of the entire family from Moscow. Is Mr. Kirpichenko, the head of illegal intelligence in those years, not ashamed of this arbitrariness, which for some reason retired lieutenant general of foreign intelligence Vitaly Pavlov called "Beria's relapse in the history of our operations abroad." I write "for some reason" is not accidental. V. Pavlov himself was involved, along with other young lieutenants - graduates of the intelligence school in 1938, in the indiscriminate persecution of honored intelligence workers in 1939 under Beria. After all, it was precisely according to the certificate prepared by Pavlov that the legendary intelligence officer E. Zarubina was expelled from the authorities, as hired by enemies of the people and having relatives abroad. Later, in 1946, on the basis of similar slanderous materials - extracts from the testimony of those arrested in 1938 - her husband, Major General V. Zarubin, was fired from intelligence at the age of 50. However, in the 1930-1950s. the

presence in the personal file of materials about repressed relatives for productive workers was not an obstacle to serving in the intelligence agencies. So, E. Zarubina, B. Afanasiev, A. Korotkov were sent abroad through the official line of Beria in 1940, despite the presence of such compromising materials.

In the mechanisms and circumstances of repressions and purges in the intelligence and security agencies in the 1930-1950s, we have to decide and sort it out now impartially against the backdrop of landslide reorganizations in the Russian special services, more frequent cases of betrayals and escapes in foreign intelligence. This will make it possible to avoid indiscriminate campaigns and purges of personnel, which had detrimental consequences for the effective work of the Soviet and Russian special services both in the 1930s and 1950s, and in our time.

Chapter

10. GERMAN SPECIAL SERVICES AGAINST THE USSR ON THE EVE OF THE ATTACK

According to the established procedure, intelligence agencies must report to the government on all signals and rumors related to the threat of a major war or local military conflict. This, one might say, is their holy duty. For this reason, it sometimes happened that we, following the lead of German disinformation, turned out to be its victims. In the spring of 1941, the Germans more than once managed to beat the Soviet residencies in Berlin, Sofia, Bucharest, Bratislava, Ankara. Our main mistake was to exaggerate the role of the German ambassador in Moscow, Count Schulenburg, who at meetings invariably emphasized the interest of the Germans in developing economic relations with the Soviet Union. However, one must also bear in mind the fact, which is wrongfully denied, that there were serious disagreements in the German leadership regarding the war against the USSR and that the final decision on the attack was made on June 10, 1941, i.e. 12 days before the start of hostilities. It may be objected to me that the Barbarossa plan was submitted for Hitler's approval as early as December 1940. But the development of military plans, including offensive large-scale operations, was a common practice of all the general staffs of the major powers of Europe and Asia in the 1930s and 1940s. It has never been a secret for us that such plans are also being developed by fascist Germany. Another thing is the political decision to unleash a war and put into practice the plans of the military command. For the German leadership, the question of war with the USSR was, in principle, resolved. It was only a question of choosing a favorable moment for the attack. From a military point of view, the time for the outbreak of hostilities was unmistakably chosen by Hitler. The Germans correctly assessed

the relatively low level of combat readiness of the Red Army troops deployed in the border districts. It was advantageous for Hitler to impose war on us at a time when the technical re-equipment of the mechanized corps and our aviation had not been completed.

And yet, if we evaluate the operations of German intelligence to misinform us in the spring of 1941, then it must be said that the contribution of the Abwehr and the security service (SD) was not so significant. Ribbentrop's special intelligence bureau, that is, that part of the intelligence apparatus that closed on the German Foreign Ministry, looks much more advantageous in this matter. Here the Germans achieved much better results. But on the

other hand, the German military intelligence - the Abwehr - effectively operated in the border and frontline zone, where unsuccessful battles for us unfolded at the beginning of the war. Under the guise of deserters from the German army, German agents were thrown into our border areas almost without hindrance. Almost in a jamb, she went to Western Belarus and Western Ukraine. The "deserters" pretended to be Austrians called up for German military service after the Anschluss of Austria. This maneuver of the Abwehr, which conducted its operations in Romania, Poland and Bulgaria, we managed to unravel in time. Austrian agents such as Johann Wechtner, Franz Schwarzel and others were identified and neutralized.

The interrogation of fake defectors allowed us to learn for the first time about the specific leaders of the German intelligence agencies. We established that the Germans were preparing their agents for short-term sabotage directly in our rear. It was absolutely clear that the German command was actively studying the future theater of operations. However, unfortunately, we did not draw the conclusion from this that Hitler was planning a blitzkrieg. In the spring and

early June 1941, the Abwehr, it must be admitted, completed its task of reconnaissance of the front line as a whole. He had data supplied by route agents and the local population. The Germans were aware of the location of our troops, the deployment of airfields, the location of oil depots thanks to the well-established work of aerial photographic reconnaissance, radio services and visual reconnaissance. In the asset of the Abwehr it is necessary to record the decommissioning on June 22 of the communication centers of the Red Army.

German air strikes against our airfields turned out to be well-planned. The airfields of the Southwestern Front were subjected to the most severe bombardments. Aviation, located in Chernivtsi, Stanislav - Ivano Frankovsk, was especially hard hit. The results of the raids were also stunning for the Belarusian (Special) Military District. Aircraft and fuel supplies were almost completely destroyed. Our aviation has suffered irreparable damage. This can be attributed to the achievements of German intelligence. She received accurate information from local residents who collaborated with the OUN and the Baltic nationalists.

At the same time, our losses were largely due to the low level of combat readiness of the Air Force and Air Defense to repel an attack. In violation of the basic provisions of the charters on the protection of airfields and strategic warehouses, even duty weapons were not deployed. For this, the command of the Air Force and Air Defense - the famous heroes-pilots and generals had to pay with their heads. They were shot in the summer and autumn of 1941 on falsified charges of treason and sabotage. The fate of G. Stern, J. Smushkevich and others is widely known. However, few people know that among the victims of this tragedy were people who were included in the fatal list at the initiative of local party leaders.

On falsified charges, Ptukhin, Hero of the Soviet Union, Hero of the Spanish War, Air Force Commander of the Southwestern Front, was shot in February 1942. He was arrested and put on trial on the basis of a special note from Nikita Khrushchev, which he handed over to Stalin, raising the question of Ptukhin's responsibility "for the defeat of Soviet aviation" as a member of the Front's Military Council.

However, German intelligence still failed to predict to the Nazi command the low probability of defeating the Soviet Union in a short-term summer military campaign. The Germans did not have comprehensive data on our military and economic potential. They were forced to rely on agents from the formations of the OUN, Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani emigration, the nationalists of the Baltic states, who did not have access to our economic ministries and departments and to the environment of the highest and middle levels of the Soviet military command.

We should dwell on the important operation of German intelligence on the very eve of the war. In the spring of 1941, under the guise of a tourist, the Abwehr sent an experienced operative to the Soviet Union. We, unfortunately, became aware of this action only when he had already left our country. But this productive scout was, in my opinion, prematurely "exposed". Abwehr Major Holtus, aka Dr. Bruno Schulze, was given the task of collecting intelligence information about military-industrial facilities. His trip to study our railways ran along the route Moscow-Kharkov-Rostov-on-Don-Grozny-Baku. The Germans sought to establish the capacity of our railway lines and presumably develop a plan of sabotage to disable them. Schulze, returning to Moscow, handed over the collected information to the German military attache and left. Later, we became aware of his voyage, and also that he received instructions to prepare sabotage operations in our oil fields in the Transcaucasus and to create a special base in Iran for this.

It is rather strange that the German intelligence of Holthus, who conducted a rather detailed visual study of our objects, instead of using him for sabotage work along this line, preferred to send him as a resident of a sabotage group to Iran. According to forged documents, the secretary of the assistant to the German trading company, Schulze Holthus, was thrown into Tabriz, where he collected intelligence information using agents from among the Armenian and Azerbaijani emigrants. There he came into our field of vision. As a result, his reconnaissance group was captured and destroyed.

On the eve of the war, the Abwehr had one significant advantage over the Soviet state security agencies. A special department for reconnaissance and sabotage operations functioned in its structure. Under him, the Brandenburg-800 training sabotage regiment was formed as part of the national companies of the Nakhtingal (Nightingale) punitive battalion long before the start of the war. Brandenburg proved itself in sabotage operations on the Western Front. Then he was relocated to the Eastern Front. This German special forces were also involved in ensuring the most important tasks of strategic importance. For example, by

According to our information received from Romania, a special company of the 2nd battalion "Nakhtingal" was transferred to Romania to protect oil wells and escort transport, i.e. the Germans used special units both for sabotage and for the protection of strategic objects. Starting from February 1941 and until June 15, sabotage units were deployed against us, taking up waiting positions. The headquarters of the battalions of the Brandenburg-800 regiment were Krakow and the town of Alenstein in East Prussia. It must be emphasized that in 1940 the special forces were used by the Germans mainly in the front line. For example,

the Brandenburg-800 regiment, during operations against Greece and Yugoslavia, captured the bridge over the Varder River in northern Greece and held it until the approach of the vanguard of the German tank divisions that had broken through to Thessaloniki. On our territory, their sabotage units initially acted in the same way as in Yugoslavia. For example, on the night of June 22, 1941, the

Abwehrgroups of the Brandenburg-800 regiment appeared in the Augustow-Grodno-Kolynka-Rudinki-Suwalki sections and captured ten strategic bridges. The consolidated company of the Brandenburg-800 and Nakhtingal battalions, while crossing the San River, the Abwehr managed to prevent the evacuation and destruction of important secret documents of Soviet military and civilian institutions in Brest-Litovsk and Lithuania. On July 15-17, dressed in Red Army uniforms, Ukrainian nationalists from the Nakhtingal battalion and the Germans of the 1st Brandenburg-800 battalion attacked the headquarters of one of the Red Army units in the forest near

Vinnitsa, but the attack was repulsed, the attackers were scattered and partially destroyed.

On July 28, saboteurs of the 8th company of the Brandenburg-800 regiment, also camouflaged in Red Army clothes, captured and cleared the bridge over the Daugava near Daugavpils, prepared for the explosion by the retreating Soviet troops. In fierce battles, the Abwehr lost the commander of the unit, but still the company held the bridge until the advance units of the German army "North", rushing to Latvia, approached.

On July 29-30, the same 1st battalion, reinforced by the Nakhtingal, occupied Lvov and took control of strategic facilities and transport hubs of the city. Then the Abwehr servicemen and the entire composition of the Nakhtingal battalion, according to special lists compiled by agents of the Krakow branch of the Abwehr, carried out mass executions of the Jewish population, and then the Polish intelligentsia in Lvov.

Assessing the actions of the German special forces, it should be noted that the Brandenburg-800 special-purpose training regiment, reinforced with special companies to perform special tasks, was planned to be used in completely different areas, including for sabotage operations against the British in the Middle East. However, the German command considered it necessary to quickly reorient them, together with the Abwehr and SD task forces, to reprisal the opponents of the occupation regime in the USSR, Greece and Yugoslavia.

As a result, we will dwell on two features of the training of German special forces and their use in the initial period of the war against us. First, he was faced with narrow combat missions of operations in the front line and in the immediate rear of the Red Army. The German command did not plan sabotage in our deep rear, with the exception of the Baku oil fields. Secondly, the enemy was forced to carry out the formation of special forces and undercover groups in our rear from emigrants, using the anti-Soviet and anti-Russian potential of only a certain part of the emigration. With the existing distrust of white emigration, mass recruitment was out of the question. This significantly limited the scope of reconnaissance and sabotage activities of the Abwehr on the Eastern Front. The special division of the Abwehr - the headquarters of "Vali" for operations against the USSR in wartime conditions was deployed by the enemy only by mid-May 1941 near Warsaw.

The fate of the leaders of German intelligence

The fate of some leaders of German intelligence known to me is interesting. Almost all of them were captured by us after the war. Colonel E. Stolze, who led the sabotage operations of the Abwehr, was taken prisoner, Deputy General Lahusen, General Bentivini, under whose leadership the counterintelligence operations of the Abwehr were carried out abroad, General G. Pikenbrock, head of the Abwehr-foreign department in 1938-1943.

The testimonies of the captured leaders of the Abwehr were sent in 1945-1948 for information to the heads of independent services and divisions of the NKVD-MGB of the USSR. Currently, these materials are given insufficient attention. Meanwhile, their testimonies show that, although preparations for a war with the Soviet Union had been underway for a long time, specific tasks for German intelligence to ensure the attack were set only one to a month and a half before the start of the war. The deployment of German troops for offensive operations began just a few weeks before June 22. The specific tasks assigned to the Abwehr in early June 1941 were limited only to the study and planning of operations within the front line. Who were the heads of German intelligence?

For example, the chief of the Abwehr-1, Lieutenant General Hans Pickenbrock, was a regular military man. The chief of the Abwehr-2, Major General Erwin Lahusen, led the German sabotage work against England, the USA and the Soviet Union. He began working in the Abwehr only in 1938, moving from the Austrian military intelligence after the Anschluss of Austria. But even before that, he worked closely with the Germans against Czechoslovakia.

I would like to note one more point connected with the fate of the leaders of German intelligence. When in 1943 Hitler broke up the Abwehr, transferring it to the apparatus under the control of the SD security service, those who fell under suspicion as members of the opposition to Hitler were sent to the front by combined

arms commanders. I remember the materials of the interrogations of the former commander of the infantry division of the German army, Lieutenant General Hans Pikenbrock. A man who, as already mentioned, was engaged in intelligence and operational work, was appointed commander of an ordinary infantry division. According to his testimony, no orders,

connected with the preparation of the Barbarossa plan, he did not receive, although there were orders and instructions in connection with the preparation for the war with Russia. In March 1941, there was a conversation about this with Canaris and then Colonel Lahousen. It was not until May 1941 that he was informed in the most general terms that the war might start in early June 1941. I note that Pickenbrock maintained a working correspondence with the head of the department of foreign armies of the general staff of the Wehrmacht ground forces, General W. Tipelskirch, who later wrote The History of World War II.

This book has also been published by us. He also had working relations with the head of the Vostok department of foreign armies, Colonel V. Kinzel, who was replaced by R. Gehlen, who led the German military information and analytical service during the war years and in 1950-1970 headed the intelligence of the FRG.

According to Pickenbrock's testimony, the tasks of military agents on the eve of the war were reduced mainly to checking old intelligence data on the Red Army, as well as to clarify the deployment of Soviet troops in the border districts. What methods

did the Germans use? Pickenbrock said that a significant number of agents were sent to the areas of the demarcation line between the Soviet and German troops. For intelligence purposes, German subjects were used who traveled to the USSR on various business, and a survey was also conducted of people who had previously been to the USSR. After the capture,

Pickenbrock was kept, as they say, in reserve. It was possible that he might be needed. Only on March 26, 1952, he was convicted by the military collegium of the Supreme Court, later, in 1955, he was repatriated under an amnesty to the Federal Republic

of Germany. A few words about the headquarters of "Vali" - a special body of the Abwehr for a secret war against the USSR. It was headed by Baum, a specialist in Russia with the rank of major. This is an indicator that the enemy, confident in a quick victory, did not deploy the central apparatus of the Abwehr against us, hoping that he would carry out his work of undercover penetration, planting a new order in our country, together with the security service, after solving the main task - the lightning defeat of the Red Army, which was thought in

mainly in the border battle. Not without reason, after all, on May 7, 1941, the head of military intelligence, Canaris, and the German military attache in Moscow, reporting to Hitler on the balance of power, spoke of the upcoming war as a fleeting campaign. From an analysis of enemy reconnaissance and sabotage operations at the beginning of the war, we see that he was well prepared

and purposefully used sabotage groups against us in the front line. We concluded that it is necessary to significantly strengthen anti-sabotage support and protection of important objects in the rear. And we can deliver retaliatory strikes with specially trained groups. Spetsnaz should have been created not to counteract sabotage, but to act primarily on enemy communications. Therefore, the NKVD troops, although they were created as a special purpose brigade, in their organization and structure were units not of mass training of saboteurs, but piece. The effectiveness of their use by interaction was determined by undercover reconnaissance combat groups, which made it possible to react as soon as possible to certain turns of events at the front. The second point - as you know, on the eve of the war, the German special services en masse used the nationalist elements that joined them, which became the basis of sabotage reconnaissance formations and in a number of cases had to link up with the bandit movement to organize unrest in our rear. Counteracting the nationalist underground, we basically beheaded it in the frontline areas. However, the damage from the joint performances of nationalists and Baltic in June-July 1941 was still close German saboteurs in the With

significant.

Muslim factor

The enemy was actively looking for opportunities to use the so-called "Muslim factor" against us. One of the German intelligence agents was Professor "Idris", a Tatar who had previously lived in Kazan and received a university education there. As a participant in the First World War, he was captured by the Germans. Even then, German intelligence officers collected information among Russian prisoners of war. In order to exchange prisoners of war, "Idris" left for Russia. And in 1922, together with the so-called Bukhara commission, he again came to Germany. Then relations between Germany and the Soviet Union improved. But after the end of the work of the commission, Idris refused to return to the USSR and remained to live in Berlin. For a long time he was a freelance consultant to the German Foreign Ministry and part-time worked in the Ministry of Propaganda, often spoke on the radio with anti-Soviet speeches in Turkish. Around "Idris" those who were used in the Muslim direction of German intelligence were grouped. The enemy was preparing Central Asia as a theater of military operations. In this case, old frames were used.

In May 1941, along with the Valya headquarters, combat bodies were created in the German security service (SD) - these are several units, the so-called abstracts, in supposedly research centers for the study of the countries of the East. For example, department "A" was in charge of material support, the supply of ammunition, radio equipment, explosives to undercover sabotage groups, which were planned to be thrown into the rear of the Red Army. Branch "B" carried out undercover intelligence work in the European part of the USSR. Branch "N" was supposed to organize sabotage in the Caucasus. Sub-report "D" carried out intelligence work in the territories of the Soviet republics of Central Asia.

In May 1941, a special group appeared for essays on the introduction of the NKVD and state security agencies into the agent-information network. Its most important task was "disclosure and liquidation of an exceptionally strong agent-information network VIIIV".

Coordinating the activities of the German military intelligence agencies, the SD security service and the Ribbentrop intelligence bureau

for some time General F. Niedermeier, well known to intelligence and counterintelligence of the NKVD, was in charge. He, fluent in Russian, repeatedly met with our resident in Berlin in 1940-1941, A. Kobulov. About the fate of Niedermeier in the Vladimir prison and about his death, we talked for a long time with an employee of the presidential administration of Russia and historian L. Reshin. Niedermeier, a prominent

German diplomat and intelligence officer, was considered a highly authoritative specialist on Russia. In the 1920s and 1930s he was the German military attaché in Moscow. With the sanction of his leadership, he acted as a double of the German and Soviet intelligence services. In this capacity, with the knowledge of Artuzov, Niedermeier maintained a personal relationship of trust with Marshal Tukhachevsky. In 1940, on behalf of Canaris and Ribbentrop, he tried to renew informal relations with us in conversations with Kobulov. However, we learned through sources in exile and in the Gestapo that Niedermeier was proposing the creation of the Turkestan Legion on the eve of the war - nationalist Muslim organizations to act against the Soviet troops. It was about the creation of the Turkestan, Volga-Tatar committees, the Crimean center, the Azerbaijani, North Caucasian, Armenian, Georgian headquarters. Thus, the German intelligence agencies had big plans to play the Muslim card against the Soviet Union.

German intelligence, in particular the Ribbentrop bureau, tried to actively use the Georgian emigration against us. Now these defectors are perceived as national heroes of Georgia. Here is a brief biography of one of them - a certain N. Kedia, the head of the so-called Georgian Committee in Berlin. Journalist by profession. Since 1927 he lived in Paris. He joined the party of Georgian Social Democrats. After the German attack on the Soviet Union, he moved to Berlin, joined the German army, collaborated with the Gestapo, and joined the leadership of the pro-German Georgian committee. During the period of temporary occupation, he appeared in Pyatigorsk, where he created the anti-Soviet nationalist organization "Association of Georgia", which provided assistance

German army, prepared agents for the transfer to the Georgian SSR. After the war he moved to the USA.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize the following. There was a cardinal difference between the Soviet state security agencies, Soviet military intelligence and German intelligence agencies on the eve and throughout the war. The entire leadership of the German and military intelligence and security services received a comprehensive education in military academies and schools. I hardly know the cadres of the military intelligence of the Red Army, but in our foreign policy intelligence of the NKVD-NKGB on the eve of the war, only Eitingon and Melnikov had a completed higher military education. But on the other hand, our apparatus was staffed by excellent specialists in Germany. The German direction - the 1st department of the NKGB intelligence department, had a backbone of employees who knew the German military and police machine very well. Among them are the head of the 1st department P. Zhuravlev, leading operatives 3. Rybkina, A. Korotkoe, the legendary E. Zarubina, who were in demand by the war after unreasonable repressions, illegal immigrants F. Parparov, I. Kaminsky, a special agent, one of the main recruiters of the Red

Chapel » M. Hirshfeld. The German intelligence apparatus at the highest and middle levels was represented by people who knew the theater of operations in Western Europe. And Major Baum, who headed the Valya headquarters a month before the war, was a good specialist in Russia, and was an officer of about the middle level. The Abwehr focused primarily on conducting sabotage operations in our immediate rear and on fulfilling tactical reconnaissance missions. The Germans managed to scout targets along the border. But in his work, the enemy was forced to rely, as I already wrote, on emigrant formations. And they were just known to us from operational records. Thus, we had great opportunities to counteract them. Finally, the most

important point. It turned out that the direct planning of enemy reconnaissance operations and their management were carried out by people incompetent in the Russian question. It is no coincidence that, due to a series of intrigues, experts on Russia were expelled from German intelligence, and the will of General von Seeckt, who warned of the impossibility of a blitzkrieg with Russia, was forgotten. A colonel, later a general

Niedermeier, since, as already mentioned, he collaborated on duty with the Intelligence Agency of the Red Army and Tukhachevsky, the Germans used it with great care. He was not completely trustworthy. He sat in a modest position as an adviser and ended up as the head of intelligence operations only along the "Muslim line". The leadership of German intelligence,

one might say, was blinded by the "blitzkrieg". In addition, they were sure that with the help of reconnaissance and sabotage actions and relying on the dispossessed peasantry in the rear of our country, they would be able to create a fifth column similar to the one that successfully operated in the countries of Western Europe. In reality, everything turned out differently. They also miscalculated about the mass support in the occupied territories of Ukraine and Belarus. And in the Baltics, the local population, with the exception of members of paramilitary nationalist formations, did not meet the German occupation with bread and salt.

Chapter

11

First tests

The heads of services and directions of the NKGB learned about the beginning of hostilities from Merkulov at 3.00 on the night of June 22. Fitin and Fedotov were absent from the urgent meeting in connection with the fulfillment of responsible assignments. That day they were out of town. Mikheev behaved most resolutely, who immediately reported that the special departments of the armies and navies had comprehensive instructions on the restructuring of operational work in wartime conditions. Merkulov's message, of course, was not unexpected. On June 18, 19 and 20, 1941, instructions on combat readiness, on the aggravation of the situation, were transmitted through the NKVD and NKGB bodies to both territorial units and military counterintelligence, as well as to the headquarters and command of the border and internal troops stationed in Ukraine, in Belarus and the Baltic states. There, combat readiness was

actually declared on June 21 at 21.30, that is, until the well-known directive of the People's Commissar of Defense sanctioned by Stalin was received. Through intelligence, we also sent a warning about the aggravation of the situation to Berlin, where Ambassador Dekanozov in the morning of June 21 ordered the personnel not to leave the territory of our missions abroad without special permission and to all employees to report their location.

On the same day, a number of our intelligence officers, summoned from France, Denmark and Italy, arrived in Berlin by train. Resident Kobulov met them at the

station. I must say that the composure and discipline shown on the ground allowed us to quickly evacuate our apparatus through diplomatic channels without any special problems. The alertness that we showed before the war, assuming

the possibility of the Germans invading our consulates also worked positively in the destruction of all means of cipher communication in Berlin, Paris, Rome, Copenhagen. Unfortunately, the Finns managed to capture a number of cipher communications, including a code book from our consulate in Petsamo. Later, in 1944, Finnish intelligence passed these materials to the British and American intelligence services. This marked the beginning of an almost thirty-year operation by the British and American cryptographic services to decrypt the correspondence of the Soviet military intelligence and NKVD residencies from the USA, Sweden, England, Turkey, Bulgaria with the Center in 1941-1946.

But we made a mistake, hoping that our residencies in Western Europe would correctly orient themselves and reorganize their work in a military way. As it turned out, even experienced intelligence officers who were behind the cordon had a very vague idea of how organizational work would be organized in the conditions of the outbreak of hostilities. This was especially true of radio engineering support in the conditions of the transition of agents to an illegal position.

All the miscalculations and shortcomings of the organizational nature of the security agencies in this most difficult period for our country, unfortunately, are not covered enough. Frankly speaking, this applies not only to the special services. The memoirs of S. Shtemenko, G. Zhukov and A. Vasilevsky, N. Kuznetsov only slightly open the pages related to the organization of the work of the military apparatus in the initial period of the war. Insufficient attention to this topic, in my opinion, was also given by our military historian V. Anfilov in his work "The Failure of the Blitzkrieg". Having received Beria's instructions (on

June 17 or 18, 1941) on organizing a reconnaissance and sabotage apparatus in case of a war, I was faced with an extremely difficult question: how an independent sabotage and intelligence service would operate in the front line and the immediate rear of the enemy in cooperation with military counterintelligence? Indeed, in the front line, it was she who personified the actions of the state security agencies.

As you know, in February 1941, special departments, military counterintelligence were transferred to the operational subordination of the People's Commissariat of Defense. The question arose: to whom directly should

Is military counterintelligence subordinated to the military leadership or the People's Commissar for State Security? There was no well-established mechanism of dual subordination. Military counterintelligence, on the other hand, cannot work effectively without relying on general directives to ensure state security c.

armed forces. On the eve of the war, the so-called interdepartmental council of the NKVD-NKGB and the People's Commissariat of Defense was created to

coordinate the work of military counterintelligence. On June 20, 1941, when it became absolutely obvious that we were only a few days from the start of the war, I was given the task of creating a special group, which, being involved in reconnaissance and sabotage operations, would be able to independently carry out sabotage actions in the immediate rear of the enemy. We took up the development of this task together with Eitingon, Melnikov. The question immediately arose: how should the apparatus being created interact with the rest of the operational units? After all, Beria, heading the NKVD, was not the people's commissar of state security, and he gave instructions on the creation of the apparatus as deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, that is, deputy head of the government. It was understood that this special apparatus should rely on both the NKGB and the NKVD, since it was in its direct subordination that the border and internal troops, i.e., the main military units that were supposed to be involved in sabotage operations, were located.

The war dictated another turn in the reorganization of the security and internal affairs agencies. Military counterintelligence returned to the NKVD apparatus, the administration of special departments was restored, and the NKVD and NKGB apparatuses were actually merged into an expanded People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. In the context of the outbreak of hostilities, our failures at the front, such a centralization of functions to ensure the state security of the country and the

protection of public order was justified. The day before the start of the war, me and a small apparatus of a group consisting of L. Eitingon, N. Melnikov, V. Drozdov, A. Kamaeva and A. Kochergina fell on difficult tasks related to the transfer of agents of other operational services of the NKVD to our disposal for use against the German secret services. This agency r

it was urgent to study for its suitability for operations in wartime conditions, and therefore the question arose of rechecking the intelligence capabilities of the NKVD as a whole. I began to actively interact with the counterintelligence department of P. Fedotov, the transport department of S. Milshtein and the secret political department headed by N. Gorlinsky. It was also about adding, in addition to the agents we have, the one that was located in the border areas, for which our reconnaissance and sabotage apparatus needed to establish direct communication with their territorial bodies and the central counterintelligence apparatus. We expected that the main events would unfold there. It was not only about preventing large-scale provocations along the entire border from Belarus to the Black Sea, but also about deploying reconnaissance and sabotage work in the immediate rear of German formations if they crossed the border. It immediately became obvious that the agents we had were not enough. In addition, there were no special military units to which agent-operational combat groups could be connected for guerrilla warfare

behind enemy lines. True, we could count on a special reserve of the Comintern, who had combat experience in guerrilla warfare in Spain. Eitingon began coordinating future actions with the General Staff and with the command of the Red Army in the border districts. Contact with the commander of the troops of the special

Belarusian district D. Pavlov did not work out for him. But good working relations were established with the organizer of the special forces and partisan detachments during the Finnish war, Colonel of the Red Army Intelligence Corps Kh. Mamsurov.

The main question of political significance immediately arose: who would give the order for specific, urgent military operations behind enemy lines along the lines of the NKVD in the event of a war? No less important was this: who should authorize the deployment of sabotage work in Poland, Germany and Scandinavia? Unfortunately, few conclusions were drawn from the experience of the Spanish and Finnish wars. The success of sabotage behind enemy lines largely depended on limiting the maneuverability of German tank groups by destroying fuel depots and disrupting

their supplies. This was worked out purely theoretically by Mamsurov and Eitingon at a meeting with Golikov in the building of the Intelligence Agency on Gogol

Boulevard. On Saturday morning, June 21, Beria agreed with Eitingon's proposals, which I actively supported, that we should have a special combat reserve of 1,200 people from the border guards and internal troops. Eitingon had an idea to create four sabotage battalions. Three were supposed to be deployed in Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic states. And leave the fourth in reserve in the Moscow region.

In the 1990s, various "documentary" materials began to be published on the development of plans for an offensive operation by the Red Army in the initial period of the war. I must say, however, with all responsibility that there was no plan for a so-called preventive war with Germany. Zhukov and Vasilevsky proposed to forestall the Germans in the strategic deployment of troops in the event that Germany began hostilities. This is a famous handwritten document dated May 15, 1941. It is now overlooked that Stalin and People's Commissar of Defense

Timoshenko made these considerations about a head-on battle the basis of the directive to the troops on the afternoon of June 22, 1941, when an attempt was made to stop the Germans with a counter-attack and deliver the main blow to them in the South-Western direction. Zhukov, in my opinion, is betrayed by his memory when he writes in his memoirs that the directive of the Headquarters to conduct a decisive counteroffensive was completely unexpected for him. After all, it was about carrying out those measures that he, as Chief of the General Staff and Major General Vasilevsky, proposed to Stalin to carry out in the event of a war more than a month before the German attack. Moreover, the May considerations of Zhukov and

Vasilevsky were in fact our first draft plan of military operations in the event of a war with Germany. It is now obvious that this document was not very perfect, moreover, the plan for

offensive operations was not much different from the plans for the offensive campaign of the Russian army in Galicia and South-Eastern Poland, developed by the tsarist general staff back in 1913

year and partly with the failures implemented in August-September 1914

of the year.

On the very first day of the war, great tension began to be felt in our work. We were particularly concerned about developments on the border. Information received the most contradictory. On the afternoon of June 22, Beria called me, Maslennikov, the commander of the border troops, and suggested that Eitingon urgently fly to Minsk. And then, after thinking it over, he said that, perhaps, it makes sense to fly to Proskurov, where events will unfold in the south-western direction, and decide what can be done along the line of sabotage service for the full support of the Red Army. However, Eitingon did not go anywhere. Summoned to Beria, he argued with me, arguing that it makes sense

to go to the place just to sort out the situation. Because in reality we had not prepared either the forces or the means for the deployment of sabotage units and guerrilla warfare. We had to first get information about what was going on there. Beria reluctantly agreed. Unfortunately, our military historians, having given significant space to the attempted counteroffensive of the Red Army on June 22-23, 1941, do not link it with the proposals of Zhukov and Vasilevsky of May 15, 1941. And they

were born, it seems to me, from the interpretation of Stalin's speech on May 5, 1941 to graduates of military academies. As you know, the efforts of the Red Army to stop the German offensive with counterattacks did not lead to anything. Our units suffered enormous losses. Practically we found ourselves without aviation and tanks. The enemy has gained air supremacy. The command of the Western

Front did not have information about the real development of events. Our tank formations, concentrated on the Bialystok ledge, fought unequal battles in the environment, had no fuel, and their fate was sealed. True, the tankers, dying in this battle, inflicted great damage on the Germans.

If we follow how the work of the central apparatus of the state security organs unfolded in the first days of the war, we will see that on June 27 the NKVD ordered the formation of troops of the Special Group under the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs to carry out special

tasks in the fight against the Nazi invaders. In the formation of the troops and the operational staff of this group, we relied on the personnel of the internal troops and the corresponding operational units of the NKVD. Initially, along with Eitingon, Sh. Tsereteli, who was involved in the selection of volunteer athletes at the Dynamo stadium, was assigned to me as a deputy without an official order. He was the organizer of the successfully completed struggle against banditry in the Caucasus in the 1920s. In July 1941, in connection with the threat of war in Transcaucasia, he was appointed head of the border troops of the Transcaucasian district. When recruiting people, we followed the

path suggested by the experience of the Finnish war - we involved the country's sports and Komsomol activists. The Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League adopted a resolution on the mobilization of Komsomol members for service in the troops of the Special Group under the NKVD. We mobilized graduates of the Higher School of the NKVD and intelligence officers of the School for Special Purposes, as well as young people from the police and fire departments. The first chief of staff of the troops of the Special Group was brigade commander Bogdanov, one of the leaders of the fire department of the NKVD. He was later replaced by Colonel Mikhail Fedorovich Orlov, a graduate of the military school for Kremlin cadets of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and the Frunze Academy. By decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, the entire reserve of combat-ready political emigrants registered with the Comintern has been placed at our disposal. In addition, the Special Group was replenished, which was very important, with the military personnel of the NKVD troops during the hostilities. In the first days of the war in the Western direction, the deputy commander of the internal troops of the NKVD, brigade commander V. Krivenko, brilliantly showed himself. The commander of the brigade of internal troops, Colonel Plekhanov, died, but his brigade managed to defend the cover of our crossings, in fierce battles for the bridges near Mogilev, Borisov and Bobruisk. Everywhere the

commanders of the border and internal troops became the chiefs of troops for the protection of the rear of the active Red Army. Until about June 26, there was apparently no reliable information about the situation on the fronts at the Headquarters. There was only an illusion that the enemy was stopped. Unc

leadership of the country regarding the current situation. This was facilitated by close information interaction between the state security agencies and the first secretary of the Communist Party of Belarus P. Ponomarenko. Information

about the situation in the western direction came to Moscow through the channels of the NKVD. First of all, it came from the head of the Belostok department of the NKBG S. Belchenko and from the People's Commissariats of State Security of Belarus, Latvia and Lithuania, where the enemy was actively and aggressively torn. It should be said that the NKVD troops also played a significant role in the focal battles, which were the first to capture the Germans, defeating the enemy reconnaissance battalion in fierce battles

near Riga. After reporting to Stalin on the unfavorable development of the situation, on June 24, 1941, Beria gave the order to take all movements along the Minsk-Moscow highway under total control. On this occasion, a special directive went into place late at night.

There was another directive from the Headquarters, addressed to the commanders of the troops of the Southwestern, Southern and Western Special District, on the formation of an army group of the reserve of the main command. This directive appeared as soon as the evacuation of Minsk began. The importance of this decision is evidenced by the fact that the Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR for Personnel S. Krugloye

was appointed a member of the Military Council of this army group. At the very beginning of July 1941, the People's Commissar of Defense ordered the 204th Airborne Brigade to be parachuted behind enemy lines in the Lyuban, Volosovichy region in Belarus to isolate and destroy enemy mobile formations. This indicates that already in the first days of the war, we tried to damage the rear of the Germans by sabotage, in particular, to destroy fuel depots, the infrastructure for supplying German motorized groups, in order to alleviate the situation for our troops located in the Bobruisk region, where a very tense situation developed. . Unfortunately, these actions were not successful. For us, this was a clear lesson of how necessary, when landing special groups behind enemy lines, it is necessary to prepare conditions that ensure their safety and combat capability.

In connection with the development of hostilities in the western direction, the Stavka decided to transfer all available hydraulic engineering means by the NKVD to the commander of the reserve armies for the fastest equipment of a fortified strip and long-term structures on the front line. The Stavka also ordered the formation of rifle and mechanized divisions from the personnel of the NKVD troops. And finally, what also deserves attention, which was hushed up for well-known reasons, is the order of the Headquarters of the High Command - to introduce Beria as People's Commissar of Internal Affairs to the Military Council of the Moscow Military District. During this period, P. Artemyev, Lieutenant General, Deputy Commander of the Internal Troops, former commander of the Dzerzhinsky Special Purpose Division, was appointed acting commander of the Moscow Military District. He brilliantly showed himself in the battle of Moscow and remained commander of the Moscow Military District as long as Stalin was alive. He was removed after the well-known events in July 1953. And about one more important circumstance - the streamlining of information work. The only reliable way to communicate

with the Headquarters remained the HF communication, which was under the jurisdiction of the NKVD. She worked without interruption during the most critical period. According to the information of the NKVD, the most important decisions were made. For example, immediately after the German attack, the question arose of putting into effect plans to cover the state border. Moreover, not only Germany's satellites attacked the Soviet Union, but also Turkey's entry into the war. At the beginning of the muller, one of the first documents signed by Zhukov was a directive addressed to the

Transcaucasian Military District. It said that the main task was not to provoke Turkey and Iran in any way, to prevent any pretext for their entry into the war on the side of Germany. "We can't give you anything right now in the sense of providing assistance - strengthening the troops of the district," the directive noted. - Report on what basis you deduced the cover plan without the decision of the Headquarters. Your post to which you refer and our directive no. 1461 say nothing about

introduction of cover plans. Your order to occupy the border should be canceled immediately.”

I would like to add that Zhukov issued this directive on the basis of information from the Azerbaijani NKGB about the introduction of a plan to cover the border in Transcaucasia using the border troops of the NKVD. The

NKVD authorities needed to establish the real picture that was taking shape in the front line in order to deploy intelligence and sabotage work there. The incoming information signaled a poorly organized evacuation of the population and material values from the border strip. It was necessary to streamline the evacuation of the families of the party and Soviet activists, as well as senior officials of the Red Army, Navy, and NKVD bodies.

Many understand this in a simplified way, meaning by evacuation nothing more than an escape. This view is completely wrong. The note of the state security organs stated that the enemy was actively studying the party-Soviet activists, had data on its composition. In addition, the territory where the hostilities unfolded was occupied by us relatively recently, only in 1939-1940, so it was reasonable to assume that the party-Soviet asset would not only be the first victim of the enemy, but part of it could be recruited by the German special services, to conduct subversive work in the Soviet rear. It was decided to establish a strict record of leading cadres who ended up in the zone of military operations, but also in the front line and, naturally, became the object of special attention of the enemy.

It seems to me that in the very initial period of hostilities, the reason for our failures and losses was also in the ambiguity of the emerging situation for our military command, and this created a completely wrong idea "at the top" of the organized actions of our troops. In fact, in June and early July 1941 there was no solid front line and the battles with the enemy from our side were in the nature of focal resistance. Hence the hitch and indistinctness in the formulation of combat missions for the troops, erroneous decisions.

It is also necessary to correctly assess the damage that has been inflicted on us as a result of the actions of the bourgeois-nationalist underground. Deportations from the Baltic States, mass repressions in Ukraine, of course, cannot be justified. However, the fact remains that the bourgeois-nationalist combat groups in Lvov, in the cities of the Baltic states, were actively involved in the sabotage actions of the special forces of the German army. The underground in these cities was the main organizational center, which formed the basis for sabotage against the Red Army. On July 7, the

Headquarters of the Supreme High Command ordered the redeployment of airborne units, since it was not possible to use them behind enemy lines due to a lack of transport aircraft. But the Stavka looked ahead. It was proposed to immediately withdraw them from the fronts. Thanks to this directive, we managed to save the airborne troops, which were subsequently used to disable enemy rear communications.

I cannot fail to note another important directive issued by Zhukov on July 10, 1941. It was prepared according to information from the NKVD and was addressed to the commanders of the troops of the Northern and Southern Fronts and the Red Army Air Force. It dealt with the fight against German airborne assaults, the need, together with the NKVD, to conduct aerial reconnaissance, going deep into the enemy's location up to 200-250 kilometers.

Day and night, small groups were supposed to bomb German airfields in order to tie down aircraft and disrupt upcoming operations. The deadlines for the implementation of this directive were very tight. Within a day, you had to submit your views. Unfortunately, during this critical period, we did not succeed in carrying out systematic attacks on German airfields, but the directive took effect in subsequent years. Our operational combat groups in the rear of the Germans strictly carried out this task - they successfully smashed their airfields.

It should be said about one more direction of work of the security agencies in this most difficult period. In a special directive of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, the NKVD and military counterintelligence were responsible for the use

special new military equipment at the front. First of all, it was about Katyusha rocket launchers. By the way, the Katyusha volleys, which I happened to see at the training ground, where after the explosions of rockets only scorched trenches and earthen structures remained, made a stunning impression on me.

According to this directive, under no conditions and circumstances, it was impossible to allow the possibility of the Katyusha being captured by the enemy. A film director, a veteran of the airborne troops, once consulted with me about the actions of a group behind enemy lines that was supposed to blow up a Katyusha. I disappointed him. As far as I know, not a single installation was captured during the difficult months of 1941, and throughout the entire war period. I only know that each combat vehicle was assigned an authorized representative of the special department of military counterintelligence, who was personally responsible for its destruction in the event of a threat of capture or the impossibility of withdrawing our troops to the location. On this occasion, I can say that the military counterintelligence in the person of such commissioners suffered very heavy losses, but they fulfilled their duty. And the movie "Five from the Sky", which tells how our saboteurs undermine the Katyusha installation that fell into the hands of the Germans, was released in the 70s, when it was quite easy to fantasize about this topic. As you

know, in the first months of the war, measures were taken that are now assessed as repressive. We are talking about mass actions to deport entire peoples and, in this regard, the liquidation of the republic of the Volga Germans. I dwell on this not in order to justify these actions, but in order to understand the then situation with the German population that found itself in a combat zone (mainly in the southern direction, where there were German colonies). A considerable German population lived in a number of our towns. Who initiated their eviction? Here, for example, is a document dated August 3, 1941 - a report from the Military Council of the Southern Front to the Headquarters of the Supreme Command. It says that during the hostilities on the Dniester, the German population fired from windows and gardens at our retreating troops. It was also established that on August 1, 1941, the inhabitants of these villages greeted the entering Germans with bread and salt. Because on the line

front there were many such settlements, in the report it was proposed to instruct the local authorities on the immediate eviction of unreliable elements. The report was signed by Commander of the Southern Front Tyulenev, member of the Military Council of the Southern Front Corps Commissar Zaporozhets, Chief of Staff of the Front Romanov. On the form of the cipher telegram is the resolution of I. V. Stalin: "Comrade. Beria. Must be evicted with a bang. I.S." And a note from an employee of the head of the secretariat of the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, Shiyan: "The People's Commissar has been

reported. August 25, 1941". On September 6, a top secret resolution of the State Defense Committee was adopted on the resettlement of Germans from Moscow, Moscow and Rostov regions to the Kazakh SSR, to the Dzhambul, Kyzyl-Orda and so on. Orders are being set up. The management of the resettlement is entrusted to the NKVD of the USSR.

These measures must be considered in the context of the aggravation of the situation on the Western Front. The order of the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR Beria to carry out an operation to resettle Germans from Moscow and the Moscow Region was issued on September 8, 1941. The operation ended by 20 September. In accordance with it, on September 14, 4954 migrants were sent from Moscow and the Moscow region in three echelons. From the general German colony, 1142 people were arrested. In total, more than 10 thousand people were

resettled. Documents like this are instructive. They help us understand the urgency of the situation, as well as who decided these issues. As for the NKVD, he did not deal with the political side of the matter. His mission was to report information about the real situation.

Here is one example of how effectively the information received from the district city departments and regional departments of the NKVD about a breakthrough in the rear of our troops by the 56th motorized corps under the command of the famous Field Marshal Manstein was implemented. The Germans then managed to break through our defenses on the Luga line near Novgorod. There was no solid front of hostilities there. The formations of our 11th Army, commanded by General A. Morozov, received an order to launch immediate counterattacks on the uncovered flanks of the Germans in the Shimsk area. The choice by General Morozov of the most vulnerable place for a strike achie

As a result, our 70th Infantry Division completely defeated the 8th Wehrmacht Panzer Division.

I write about this to answer the current military historians, and especially unqualified publicists, that, despite the unfavorable development of events at that time, the picture of hostilities did not seem hopeless to us. When the enemy, after a successful offensive in the border battles, was stopped at the Luga line, it turned out that the German tank group had lost up to 50 percent of its materiel. Now it is customary to say that the troops of the Red Army, being attacked

by the Wehrmacht, suffered a crushing defeat in the border battles, that the Soviet command was not at the height of the situation. This is true, but vicious attacks on the command of the Red Army are unacceptable and insulting. They are refuted not only by the memories of our military leaders, but also in the assessments of the German command, despite their generally successful military operations in June-July 1941.

In his diary, Colonel-General Halder, Chief of the General Staff of the Wehrmacht Ground Forces, already wrote on July 11, 1941 that "the enemy command is acting skillfully, the enemy is fighting fiercely and fanatically, German tank formations have suffered significant losses in personnel and materiel, the troops are tired." He is echoed by the commander of the Army Group "Center" of the German troops, Field Marshal von Bock. On July 12, he reports to the command of the ground forces that "the general situation with the supply and support of the army group, including the air force, requires certain restrictions both in time and in the scope of the operation." All this suggests that the first phase of the German offensive bogged down by mid-July 1941.

By this time, I had established permanent working contact with the Deputy Chief of the Operations Directorate of the General Staff, Major General A. Vasilevsky. He repeatedly came to the NKVD together with the head of the Intelligence Department of the Red Army F. Golikov. Both, dressed in civilian clothes by order of Zhukov and Merkulov, participated in the interrogations of a major agent of the Abwehr Nelidov, as a participant in German military-strategic games, giving theoretical conclusions about the outcome of the battle, he stated that if the German army did not

within two months, our main centers such as Leningrad, Moscow, Kyiv, Rostov-on-Don, then the war for the German side can be considered lost. In those hot days of July 1941,

Vasilevsky constantly called us and asked for information from the local NKVD about the advance of the German army. I must say that only with the return of Marshal B. Shaposhnikov to the post of Chief of the General Staff, the entire system of operational exchange of information on the situation on the fronts between the NKVD and the command of the Red Army was streamlined.

Our military intelligence also played an important role in correctly assessing the development of the situation. In particular, the intelligence department of the headquarters of the Western Front, deputy. whose chief was Colonel M. Milshtein, who later became one of the leaders of the undercover intelligence of

the Red Army during the war years. The decision of the leadership of the General Staff to send the leaders of the leading areas of military intelligence to the front to organize intelligence work in view of the aggravation of the situation can be assessed in different ways. But Soviet military intelligence coped with this task. Their observations and conclusions contributed to the correct choice of the direction of the counterattack on the enemy troops in the Yelnya area, which was successfully led by G. Zhukov. The Yelninsky bridgehead of the German motorized

group, which threatened Moscow, was liquidated. With all the tense atmosphere of July-August 1941, we never had a shadow of doubt about victory. Additional confidence was given by information coming from England, the USA, Scandinavia, Bulgaria and Switzerland that the losses of the Wehrmacht in manpower and equipment are huge, that there are enormous difficulties in supplying fuel to the German army, advancing in divergent directions, that all this disrupts the plan Hitler to win the blitzkrieg. The failure of the blitzkrieg in August 1941 was already obvious to me and the Soviet leadership.

At the same time, serious mistakes and miscalculations were made in our intelligence and analytical work during this period. We did not foresee in August 1941 that the Hitlerite command, temporarily refusing to throw at Moscow, would send all its

mobile formations - two tank groups - to encircle our troops of the Southwestern Front. Unfortunately, we did not have the data that could prevent this, and despite the fact that from the very beginning we focused reconnaissance and sabotage work on studying and undermining the combat capabilities, primarily of the shock motorized formations of the German Wehrmacht.

Task Force V. Zuenko in the rear of the Wehrmacht

Our persistent desire to counteract the German offensive operations on the Western Front, first of all, was due to the fact that this direction was considered the most important - the enemy was approaching Moscow. At the beginning of August 1941, a task force led by senior lieutenant of state security V. Zuenko was transferred to its rear, which included associate professor of Moscow State University P. Kumachenko and teacher of the Institute of Foreign Languages 3. Pivovarova. I especially remember her, because later she worked in department "C" with materials on the atomic problem.

Kumachenko and Pivovarova managed to get a job as translators at the headquarters of a German tank division and, using well-established two-way radio communications, brilliantly completed their task. The information received from the task force headed by Zuenko was immediately reported to the high command.

The experience of this group was invaluable for us: we were aware of the actions and plans of the German command, which made it possible to clearly work out the task assignments that the operational combat groups that we hastily formed received. From the reports coming from the Zuenko group, it became clear to us the problems that the strike formations of the Guderian tank group faced. The information received

confirmed the failure of the German plans for a blitzkrieg not only due to the heroic resistance of the Red Army soldiers, but also due to insoluble problems in the logistical part: the depreciation of equipment in

tank divisions, a catastrophic shortage of gasoline. The information received from the task force headed by Zuenko was immediately reported to the high command. Our task force proceeded with the German tank

division until reaching the Vyazma region, on the near approaches to Moscow, and disappeared in time when the German military counterintelligence

there was a danger of "light up".

It should be said that no one in the Center initially counted on such a success for Zuenko, did not assume that he would be able to penetrate the headquarters of the 3rd Panzer Division and "keep abreast". At the same time, the task force, being in an advantageous position, had no undercover connection with the underground residency, which would have made it possible to use all its capabilities more efficiently. This was one of the key problems of leading a sabotage war; the fact that the reconnaissance group went deep behind enemy lines, and then, as the troops advanced, began to operate in the front line, was not foreseen. A few words about how her information was implemented by the Supreme High Command. Based on our materials, a directive was issued on the

necessary strengthening of reconnaissance in the Western direction, since we presented irrefutable data on the preparation of the Nazi troops for an offensive against Moscow. The issued directive ordered to conduct reconnaissance within three days to identify the enemy grouping in front of the front line, while paying special attention to the areas of concentration of German tank units. Thus, it was about the implementation by us of information from our operational group and its further systematization. To do this, we connected the military counterintelligence, the intelligence of the Red Army Air Force, the Intelligence Directorate of the Red Army, and as a result, a directive was born that the NKVD intelligence reports were submitted to the General Staff daily, photographs of the most characteristic enemy groupings were sent. Such experience of interaction of all types of intelligence in the future gave good results. However, events on the Western Front in late September - early October, unfortunately, did not turn in our favor.

Creation of special forces and problems of its use

On June 27, 1941, in accordance with the order of the NKVD, at the Dynamo stadium "the formation of a unit began to carry out special tasks of the People's Commissariats of Internal Affairs and Defense of the USSR to defeat and destroy the Nazi invaders and their henchmen who invaded the territory of the USSR." This date should be considered the birthday of the special forces of the Soviet state security agencies.

In the first period of existence from June 27 to October 1941, this military unit was called "troops of the Special Group under the NKVD of the USSR" and consisted of two brigades with attached special units (sapper-blasting company, parachute service, auto company, communication company).

The recruitment of special forces personnel took place: - from the people's commissariats of internal affairs and state security; - from the higher school of the NKVD; - from the NKVD-

NKGB of the republics and the

UNKVD-NKGB of the territories and regions; - from the police and fire departments of the NKVD of the USSR; - from the Central Institute of Physical Culture and athletes of voluntary sports societies who arrived at the compound voluntarily;

- from Komsomol members according to the layout of the Central Committee of

the Komsomol; from the Comintern. In October 1941, the troops of the Special Group were reorganized into the Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade for Special Purpose - OMSBON, which included two motorized rifle regiments of four and three battalions. At the same time, a special school for junior commanders was organized at the OMSBON

specialists.

Taking into account the experience of hostilities in Spain and in the Finnish winter campaign, the combat training of the special forces was organized in such a way that it could perform the following combat missions:

- as part of the unit, units and formations to conduct combined arms combat and reconnaissance;

- to carry out special work at the front on the installation of engineering minefields and the creation of combined systems using new technology;

- carry out mining and demining of defense facilities of national importance; - conduct sabotage, combat, landing and reconnaissance operations behind enemy lines by skillfully operating subunits, small groups and individually. Despite the tense conditions, the formation of special forces proceeded

very quickly. Since Belarus and the western regions of Russia were already occupied by the Germans, the main task of the special forces was seen primarily in organizing sabotage operations behind enemy lines. At first, the operational groups that were preparing for operations behind German lines were located at the dacha of the former People's Commissar of Internal Affairs Yagoda "Ozery", which was subsequently first used by Yezhov, and after the war went as a Rest House to the Administration of the Central Committee of the CPSU. On July 7, 1941, the Germans threw out Brandenburg sabotage units from aircraft in the Mogilev-

Podolsk region, which tried to break through to the rear of our troops and occupy a small bridgehead. But we, having pulled up troops from ^{shelf} our reserves, liquidated this landing. From this event, we concluded: The enemy is going to actively use his special forces to disrupt communications in our rear. It is known that before that there were no special forces in the state security organs, as a military formation. The plans of Y. Serebryansky to create special forces in 1938 on the basis of the school for

training saboteurs that existed under the Special Group were not implemented due to his arrest. However, in the department of operational equipment there was a special group for the preparation of sabotage devices, headed by a brilliant specialist then senior lieutenant of state security A. Timashkov. It was he, together with a student of the Serebryansky special school K. Kvashnin, who became the head of the most important direction of our work - equipping the special forces with sabotage equipment.

Meanwhile, the People's Commissariat of Defense included airborne troops, reconnaissance companies and subunits, which formed the backbone of the reconnaissance and sabotage groups of the Red Army.

Army. But then there was still no complete understanding of the role of special forces. It was believed that the most trained fighters selected from the border and internal troops could be redirected within a short time to solve special tasks behind enemy lines. All this, no doubt, is true, but one important circumstance was overlooked. These fighters did not have special training for operations in the territory occupied by the enemy, and even in secret conditions.

It should be said that now few people remember the name of the founder of the Soviet special forces, the organizer of the first military formations to conduct sabotage operations behind enemy lines. This is Colonel X. Mamsurov, a participant in the guerrilla war in Spain, who later became a colonel general, one of the leaders of Soviet military intelligence. He was the first during the Soviet-Finnish war to demonstrate how to form special forces units in combat operations with the enemy in the adjacent territory. Special forces under the command of Mamsurov withdrew from the encirclement a number of our units that had fallen into a difficult situation in Finland. Mamsurov mobilized the sports activists of Leningrad. Leningrad skiers, masters of sports and the physically strongest young men formed the backbone of his sabotage detachment, which successfully operated in the rear of the Finns. Mamsurov's experience was very useful at the beginning of the Great Patriotic War. We announced a special mobilization of the best athletes to the special reserve, who were immediately enlisted in the NKVD special forces and later successfully operated behind enemy lines. A major role in the formation and combat

activities of the OMSBON was played by the deputy head of the Special Group, and then the brigade commander (since October 15, 1941), Colonel Mikhail Fedorovich Orlov. In December 1920, he voluntarily joined the Red Army, participated in the suppression of anti-Soviet rebellions, then graduated from the All-Russian Central Executive Committee Joint Military School. In 1924 he became a candidate, in February 1926 - a member of the CPSU (b). In 1930-1931 he took part in the fight against banditry in Azerbaijan and against Basmachi in Central Asia. For a long time he served in the troops of the NKVD, worked in military educational institutions. Before the start of World War II, Mikhail Fedorovich worked in

the post of head of the Sebezh military school of the NKVD and at the same time studied in absentia at the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze.

Aleksey Alekseevich Maksimov, an engineer by education, was appointed commissioner of the OMSBON. Maximov's successor was the regimental commissar Archil Stepanovich Maisuradze. In this position, he went through the entire Great Patriotic War, and after its completion, he worked for many years in the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army. In

OMSBON, as in all other units and formations of the Red Army, there was a political department, which was headed by Lev Aleksandrovich Studnikov. A former laborer and then a Komsomol worker, he worked in the North Caucasus, was the secretary of the Grozny city committee, the responsible instructor of the North Caucasian regional committee and the secretary of the Chechen-Ingush regional committee of the Komsomol. In 1930, Studnikov joined the party, and then the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks sent him to the party and political work in the Red Army. Lev Aleksandrovich was sent to study at the Military-Political Academy. The study was interrupted twice: in 1939 due to a military conflict with Japan on the Khalkhin Gol River, where Studnikov was sent as a representative of GlavPURKKA, and in 1940 due to the Soviet-Finnish war. Studnikov graduated from the Academy in June 1941, on the eve of the Great Patriotic War. The arrival of an experienced political worker with an academic education, multiplied by the experience of two wars, was of great importance.

The reconnaissance leaders of the brigade were Antufeev and Major border guard B.K. Spiridonov.

The backbone of the command staff of the brigade was made up of teachers and students of the Higher School of Border Troops and the Higher School of the NKVD, and other educational

institutions of the NKVD of the USSR. The commander of the 1st regiment (after the secondment of N.E. Rokhlin, who was briefly in this position, to another job) was Vyacheslav Vasilyevich Gridnev, who had previously been the chief of staff of the Special Group. In 1942-1943 he commanded the OMSBON. After graduating from the Higher Border School, he became the commandant of the border station, which guarded the Soviet-Iranian border. Here they fight with the Basmachi, who repeatedly tried to cross the border.

Gridnev's biography also includes the liquidation of the Basmachi gang. Gridnev served on the border for twelve years.

Sergei Ivanovich Volokitin, later known as the famous partisan commander Sergo, became the commissar of the 1st regiment. His father is a hereditary glass blower, the first worker was the director of the Krasny May plant after October. Like other young men of his generation, Sergei Ivanovich studied at the FZU, was a mechanic, turner, foreman at the Moscow plant named after Sergo Ordzhonikidze. The nineteen-year-old Komsomol leader was sent in 1931 to study at a Chekist school. By the beginning of the war, he was a senior lieutenant of state security. We add to this: he came to OMSBON as an order bearer. The

first regiment of OMSBON was international. The decisive role in its formation was played by the Executive Committee of the Third Communist International and its General Secretary Georgy Dimitrov, as well as the leaders of the communist parties who were then in Moscow: Wilhelm Pick, Maurice Thorez, Palmiro Togliatti, José Diaz and Dolores Ibarruri, Johann Kopenig, Klement Gottwald, Harry Podlit and others. They did everything possible to gather their compatriot political emigrants scattered throughout the Soviet Union for various reasons and send them to OMSBON. Stella Blagoeva, the daughter of the founder of the Bulgarian Communist Party, Dimitar Blagoev, gave a lot of effort to the formation of the brigade. On behalf of Georgy Dimitrov, she selected volunteers, often visited the brigade, inspired the Omsbonites with her fiery comradely conversations.

The most complete information about this regiment has been preserved thanks to the memoirs of the outstanding son of the Bulgarian people Ivan Tsolovich Vinarov, who became the deputy commander of the regiment, and the Spaniard Serna Roque, who at one time was a representative of the Spanish Communist Party in the Popular Front of his country, who fought on the Madrid and Catalan fronts, a fighter of OMSBON, who fought in the Red Army as a commissar of a battalion, brigade, division. Recently, some information about the Vietnamese, who also fought as part of a brigade, has become known.

The international regiment of the brigade was unstable. Initially, it consisted of a little less than a thousand

fighters. Almost a third of them were Spanish communists who left their homeland after the defeat of the Spanish Republic. The other part was made up of Bulgarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Austrians, Hungarians, Yugoslavs, Romanians, Greeks, Italians, Germans, Vietnamese, French, Finns. There were also several Englishmen, members of the Communist Party, whom the Patriotic War found in Moscow, where they arrived on party business. There were also many Austrians, they were second in number after the Spaniards. For the most part, these were Schutzbundists who emigrated to the Soviet Union after the July Uprising of 1927 and the second Vienna Uprising of 1934, which were brutally suppressed. I. Vinarov tells a little more about the

Bulgarians. There were over a hundred of them. These were primarily representatives of those groups that had previously carried out underground work in their homeland on the instructions of the Communist Party of Bulgaria. In the Moscow region and the Crimea (before its occupation), about sixty more Bulgarian political emigrants were trained, who at any moment were ready to go on a combat mission behind enemy lines. Fifteen political emigrants and party leaders, as well as the sons and daughters of party veterans who grew up in the Soviet Union and received education here, were enrolled in the international regiment. These were: Georgy Pavlov Gonyu, Easy Katsarov, Gustav Vlahov, Pencho Stolov, Ilia Denev, Ivan Krekmanov, doctor Vera Pavlova (daughter of an old party functionary and major philosopher Todor Pavlov), Vihra Atanasov, Agga Dimitrova (daughter of party veteran Stefan Dimitrov), the sons of Georgy Mikhailov - Ognyan and Kremen, the daughter of Georgiy Karastyanova - Lilia, the son of Ivan Pashov - Georges, the daughter of Georgy Damyanov - Rosa and others.

About Ivan Tsolovich Vinarov himself, one can say in the words of General S. M. Shtemenko: "Ivan Vinarov was a Bulgarian revolutionary. At one time, he was forced to leave his homeland and emigrated to the USSR, graduated from the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze and received the rank of colonel in the Red Army. This was followed by work in the apparatus of the Comintern and the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee of the BRP. In the post-war years, Lieutenant General Ivan Vinarov became a prominent military figure in People's Bulgaria.

The Spanish Internationalists were under the command of Captain Peregrin Pérez Galarza, their commissar was Cefarico Alvarez. They were divided into three platoons. One of the platoons was commanded by Serna Roque. Of the 125 Spaniards, there were six women. Among them, Maria Fernandez, Angel Sanchez and Juanita Prot especially stood out.

José Viesca was also a notable figure among the Spanish internationalists. The son of a major mine owner, Count, he joined the Communist Party of Spain as a young man and was an active participant in the Asturian uprising of 1934. Sentenced to death, commuted to thirty years in prison, he received his freedom thanks to the establishment of republican power in Spain. In Spain, Viesca was a battalion commissar and later commanded a brigade.

Of the six Vietnamese Omsbon men mentioned by I. Vinarov, after a long search, in which the council of OMSBON veterans, activists of the Central Council of the Soviet Vietnamese Friendship Society, television and a number of newspapers in Moscow (especially Pravda) and Hanoi (Nyanzan) participated, now their names became known: Li Nam Thanh, a native of a revolutionary family; (Nguyen Xinh Thanh), originally from the province where Ho Chi Minh was born; Lee Tuhk Chat (Vuong Thun Thai), also from a revolutionary family; Vuong Thun Tinh, who joined the revolutionary youth association of Vietnam in 1925; Li An Tao (Hoang An To), Li Fu Shang. We intended to use them for sabotage in the event of a Japanese attack. However, in the difficult situation of the fighting near Moscow, a number of these comrades were involved and

died. The commander of the 2nd regiment was Major Sergei Vyacheslavovich Ivanov. He received his labor hardening in the mines of Donbass. After returning to his native Voronezh after October, Ivanov voluntarily joined the cavalry division. And then study at the Moscow Infantry School, teaching at the border school (taught tactics and topography), during which he graduated in absentia from the Military Academy named after M.V. Frunze. The Great Patriotic War found him in the position of inspector of the Main Directorate of the Moscow Air Defense of the NKVD. And one more touch to his biography. It was Colonel Ivanov who, after Dmitry Medvedev's illness, was instructed to head

the famous detachment "Winners" at the final stage of its military operations in Ukraine.

Sergei Trofimovich Stekhov, major, was appointed commissar of the 2nd regiment. That's what they called him "our major." Like Gridnev, he became a member of the Bolshevik Party in 1918. Then he joined the Red Army, was an active participant in the Civil War. In 1939, the party sent him to work in the NKVD. In the 2nd regiment and in the entire brigade, Sergei Trofimovich enjoyed great prestige and great respect. The second

regiment consisted mainly of workers, athletes, students and schoolchildren (who had just graduated from the tenth grade), mostly who came in the direction of the Central Committee of the Komsomol. The formation of the regiment took place at the Dynamo stadium. Most of the data was preserved about athletes, among whom there were many famous ones who glorified their homeland at international competitions. Among them were: boxers Nikolai Korolev, Sergei Shcherbakov, Eduard Lazovsky; track and field athletes Georgy and Serafim Znamensky, Grigory Ermolaev, Moses Ivankovich, Leonid Mitropolsky; wrestlers Grigory Pylnov, Anatoly Katulin, Leonid Egorov, Shalva Chikhladze; weightlifters Nikolai Shatov, Vladimir Krylov; rowers Alexander Dolgushin, Ippolit Rogachev, Alexei Smirnov, Sergei Sheremetiev; cyclists Fedor Tarachkov, Viktor Seipold; speed skaters Konstantin Kudryavtsev, Anatoly Kapchinsky; skier Lyubov Kulakova and others. If earlier they

defended the sporting honor of their homeland in stadiums, in swimming pools and on the starting tracks, now they have come to OMSBON to defend it with weapons in their hands from the fascist invaders. Their influence in the brigade was very great. They became mentors to soldiers who were not yet physically tempered. In the future, behind enemy lines, athletes were always among the first in heavy battles with the enemy.

Volunteer students from Moscow universities were also enrolled in the regiment. About thirty people came from the Moscow Institute of History, Philosophy and Literature (MIFLI). Many fighters were yesterday's students and graduate students of Moscow State University, historical and archival, construction, mining, leather, machine tool and

other metropolitan universities. There were many workers, technicians, engineers from the car factory and other enterprises in OMSBON.

A little later, the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League, by its decree of September 4, 1941 "On the mobilization of Komsomol members for service in the troops of the Special Group under the NKVD of the USSR", sent 800 urban and rural Komsomol members from fourteen regions of the RSFSR to the OMSBON. Tulyaks, Yaroslavl, Ryazan, Kuryan, Penza, Saratov, Ural and Kazan filled the barracks of the brigade. Komsomol members of Moscow were also

added here. Replenishment of the personnel of the brigade was carried out throughout the years of the war. Its fighters were partisans who joined the special detachments, communist volunteers and Komsomol members. The total number of brigade soldiers on average during the war years exceeded 10 thousand people. But at the same time, its backbone, the most active and mobile part, remained the Chekists, border guards and volunteer athletes, workers, students of Moscow, foreign internationalists who were the first to come to the special forces. The special forces parachute service was headed by a prominent

master and organizer of parachuting before the war, Major A. Fateev, later he was deputy head of the sabotage and intelligence service of the USSR Ministry of State Security. With him, the famous paratroopers M. Malinovskaya and T. Shishmareva and others came to the brigade. Major M. Shperov, who became Major General of the Engineer Troops of the

Soviet Army, as the commander of the combined OMSBON detachment, led the mine-blasting business and combat operations to equip barrier structures. From the very first days of its existence, a large group of women came to OMSBON, mostly radio operators and nurses. I will

name just a few of them: Masha Petrushina, Galina Efimova, Lydia Sherstneva, Lyudmila Potanina, Zina Chernysheva, Shura Pavlyuchenkova, Olya Mikhailova, Dusya Prikazchikova, Tosya Karaseva, Tonya Anisimova, Lyuba Kapitonova.

Volunteers who had just passed the state exams at the medical institute were put at the head of the medical service of the regiments: Albert Tsessarsky and Ilya Davydov. Vera Davydova (Pavlova) was also a doctor; Victor Strelnikov and Vladimir Nazarov came to the brigade from the fourth year of medical school. When the formation

The brigade was completed, and its composition gained experience in combat operations at the front and behind enemy lines, the process of "returning" its fighters and commanders to separate parts of the Red Army began (for example, to staff the Separate, later the 70th Army, border units, special schools, etc.). Only from 1941 to 1944, 5074 people were seconded from OMSBON.

According to incomplete data, more than one thousand Omsbonites defended Moscow. Their contribution to the defense of the capital, however, is not limited to this figure. Let's compare it with the following facts: if the miners of OMSBON under the command of M. Shperov put 40 thousand mines on the Western Front, then the entire Kalinin Front - 4500; The peculiarity of this work was that new equipment was used exceptionally widely: guided land mines, anti-tank fire mines, barrage mines installed at the front to a depth of one hundred kilometers. According to incomplete data, 30 German tanks, 20 armored cars, 68 vehicles with motorized infantry, 19 cars with officers, 53 motorcycles were blown up on land mines and mines set by the OMSBON combined detachment in the Moscow region. The brigade subdivisions seized 17 vehicles in good condition, 35 motorcycles with sidecars, many machine guns, radios and other military property. Throughout the war, and even in the tense situation of 1941, we at the same time took care of the

special forces. He was involved in combined-arms operations during the entire war only three times - in battles near Moscow, in the battle for the Caucasus in 1942, and in the battle on the Kursk Bulge as part of a sapper army in 1943.

In December 1941, when the question arose of preparing a landing operation in the Crimea - in Kerch and Feodosia - Beria suggested that I contact Admiral I. Isakov and prepare a plan for the participation of our special forces in the amphibious assault. But OMSBON did not take part in these battles, although our group of A. Arapov was thrown into the Crimea in an extremely difficult operational situation, in 1945 he was sent through my line for operational work in Yugoslavia. We

formed special forces in an extremely short time. He became a highly combat-ready formation and played a significant role in the deployment of the war behind enemy lines. Unfortunately, no proper conclusions have been drawn from the lessons of the war and the tragic summer of 1941. One year later

after the end of the war, in the conditions of a tense international situation, a wave of nationalist banditry in the Baltic states and Western Ukraine, the special forces - the Separate Special Purpose Detachment of the USSR Ministry of State Security was disbanded "due to the exhaustion of functions." It seems that the reason for this was the hostile attitude towards the OMSBON during the war years, V. Abakumov, who became Minister of State Security in May

1946. The special forces of the state security agencies have always been a victim political clashes "above".

It is known that it was recreated as a special-purpose unit for reconnaissance and sabotage operations only in 1981. But, unlike the Americans, we have not yet decided on the concept of using special forces through the security agencies and military intelligence in solving the key issues of hostilities in a local war. This applies in particular to the wars of the so-called small

intensity.

The use of special forces, in my deep conviction, in a local war is a problem, the solution of which can be found in the context of its interaction with other branches of the armed forces, in close connection with measures for agent-operational support of its combat activities. Therefore, is it legitimate to talk about individual tasks performed by special forces,

dictated by the political situation? The use of this force in peacetime and wartime, as well as in local wars, is a very large, unresolved problem. The events in Chechnya and the local war in Tajikistan are excellent confirmation of this. The main reason that the special forces of the Foreign Intelligence Service was disbanded in 1991-1993 is that when the leadership of the state security agencies changes, the country's leadership, first of all, refuses political trust to the special forces,

fearing for their power.

When, in 1993, Minister of State Security Barannikov ceased to enjoy the confidence of the president, this predetermined the end of the special forces units, which at one time were transferred to the structure of the ministry.

However, the point is not that Alfa and Vypel refused to storm the White House in 1993. The root cause lies in something else - the initial mistrust. One was the distrust of the leadership in the Special Group of Serebryansky in 1938, another in 1953 after the arrest of Beria in Sudoplatov, the third in the Brezhnev era in 1967 in the chairman of the KGB Semichastny, the fourth in the era of the so-called imaginary putsch and the collapse of the country in 1991.

Specifically, I can quote the words of the President of Russia, which became known to me, uttered by him at an expanded meeting of the collegium of the Ministry of Security in March 1993. Then Barannikov was still a minister. But Yeltsin doubted his loyalty and did not want to have forces at his disposal.

special purpose.

The President claimed that, according to verified data, the Ministry of Security withholds certain information from him. They answer him that only verified information is being reported to you, dear president. There were courageous people to answer like that. Yeltsin reacted to this: "I believe you, but not quite." With such a position, any question of special funding, special support for special forces in the conditions of the war in the Caucasus develops into another question: in whose hands is the special forces. In the hands of Security Minister Barannikov, who has lost confidence? This is completely obvious. Under these conditions, the state security special forces could not be properly involved in the Chechen campaign. And the tasks of undercover support of the military operation in Chechnya in 1994, military counterintelligence simply failed. It was at this time, unfortunately, that the special forces units and the agent-sabotage apparatus were disbanded

and removed from the foreign intelligence service. And this is in the conditions of local wars raging on the territory of Russia and the CIS. It is sad that not only in Chechnya, but during the special operation in Afghanistan, the lessons of the past war were also disregarded.

Six months before the events of December 1979, employees of the 8th department (reconnaissance and sabotage) of the KGB foreign intelligence arrive in Afghanistan. Options for the forceful participation of our units in solving the directions of the Afghan crisis that are beneficial for the Soviet Union are being worked out. Not killed yet

leader of the Afghan revolution Taraki. But the involvement of our reconnaissance and sabotage apparatus in future events is already obvious. Now there is a lot of controversy on this topic. But I would like to point out one circumstance. In what circumstances was the assault on the residence-palace of President Amin in the suburbs of Kabul by the KGB and GRU special forces undertaken? Was this noisy action necessary in the conditions when Soviet troops entered Afghanistan at the

request of this particular person? This question should be answered by those who were then senior officials and representatives of the KGB and foreign intelligence in Afghanistan - Generals B. Ivanov and V. Kirpichenko. As participants in the December events in Kabul told me, by that time, attempts to eliminate Amin with the help of snipers and tracking his car had not yielded results in the line of undercover and operational measures. The rate on the use of poisons did not materialize.

Participants in the well-known events in Afghanistan in December 1979 who spoke to me claimed that Amin was poisoned by one of our agents, and saved by another, a doctor.

Maybe someone in the Kremlin lost their nerve. But why was it necessary to make an unprecedented decision to storm the palace. After all, when the Soviet troops entered Afghanistan, our capabilities in the elimination of Amin expanded immeasurably. It could be removed without any casualties on our part on the territory of our military unit. After all, the special forces of our military intelligence, as our military attache in Afghanistan noted, liquidated Amin's henchmen in the General Staff without

suffering any losses. The KGB special forces in Afghanistan showed courage, steadfastness, genuine heroism, suffered significant losses, but the KGB leadership, throwing it into a risky assault on Amin's fortified palace, made, in my opinion, a serious, tragic mistake. It is also significant that the reconstruction of the professional special forces - the Vympel unit - in the state security agencies for reconnaissance and sabotage operations took place only almost two years after the assault in Kabul - on August 19, 1981, when the scale of hostilities and special operations expanded dramatically.

Bowing our heads in memory of those who died during the Great Patriotic War and in the performance of international duty,

in the current conditions of large-scale threats to Russia's sovereignty, it is necessary to develop a science-based special doctrine that meets the requirements of the time for the balanced use of all types of special forces of state security agencies and military intelligence. At the same time, the right lessons must be learned from both our successes and failures in the series of wars and conflicts of the 20th century. In the United States, the importance of special forces in the early 90s. in local wars they attach exceptional importance. It is no coincidence that the commander of the American special forces, General D. Shelton, is appointed chairman of the joint chiefs of staff - the American analogy of our General Staff of the Armed Forces. Consequently, there is an obvious need for centralized coordination of the continuous planning and use of special forces - the most important tool for ensuring the security of our country and an integral structural component of the armed forces of the Russian state.

About Army General D. Pavlov

The erroneous decisions of the Headquarters in June 1941 played a significant role in the miscalculations of the commander of the troops of the Western Special Military District, General of the Army D. Pavlov. Eitingon, who knew him well from Spain, said on the very first day of the war that Pavlov showed himself there "at the level of a tank battalion commander, although he was a tank brigade commander." Pavlov is now characterized by everyone as a man with a rather narrow military outlook, who did not sufficiently imagine the tasks of leading military operations in the conditions of modern warfare. He is

opposed by the new generation of Red Army generals of 1942-1945. However, this is not entirely true and Pavlov's guilt is exaggerated. G. Zhukov, in his memoirs, which, frankly, sometimes give me an unpleasant aftertaste, interprets in his own way the results of the operational game that took place in the General Staff in the winter of 1940-1941.

He writes that there were many actual examples in the command-staff game, which were later confirmed by the tragic events of June 1941, when the Germans managed to take advantage of the shock groups hanging over the Bialystok salient and defeat us.

The game, according to Zhukov, was replete with dramatic moments that Pavlov should have taken into account in subsequent battles. However, while stating this, Zhukov forgets about the difference in the nature of the operational game and the situation in which Pavlov found himself. So, when Pavlov, after his arrest, was accused of not having foreseen the development of events on the Western Front and, accordingly, had not prepared the troops, Pavlov resolutely denied this accusation. After all, the game worked out an offensive, not a defensive operation of the Red Army, while the enemy, in the role of which Zhukov was, delivered the main blow from East Prussia in the direction of Kaunas-

Vilnius Minsk. Pavlov then failed to cope with the task of delivering a counterattack to the enemy. It was precisely in accordance with the experience of this operational game that Pavlov already during the course of hostilities mistakenly assumed that the Germans were delivering the main attack on him from the north-west through Lithuania, while the Germans were

advancing in two converging directions from the areas of Suwayki and Brest. But it's not about memoirs. The fact is that the decision to arrest Pavlov was approved by Zhukov, and not by Tymoshenko. Hostile relations developed between Pavlov and

Zhukov. This is one aspect. And the other is best to follow the facts. I am surprised by today's historians and military leaders who, talking about 1941, write "true" history without checking the facts on this important event.

After the crushing defeat of the Red Army in Belarus, the question arose of trust in the commanding cadres of the Red Army. Through the line of military counterintelligence, compromising materials were raised against all front commanders, commanders of armies, corps and divisions. All false and knocked out testimonies about the mythical military conspiracy, about the alleged involvement in the conspiratorial group of Tukhachevsky and others were reported to Stalin and Molotov.

Stalin instructed the Secretary of the Central Committee, G. Malenkov, to study these documents. However, it should be borne in mind that the certificates and conclusions signed by Mikheev, the head of military counterintelligence, were sent to the Central Committee, as was customary, without comments from the NKVD.

Only the presence of such materials was reported. Despite compromising data on the involvement of mythical groups and military conspirators in the affairs, in July-August 1941, for all the persons mentioned in these documents, the decisions of the Central Committee were made to approve them as commanders of the armies and formations of the Red Army. Thus, I have the courage to assert that Stalin, Molotov, Beria, Malenkov already then knew the true value of the so-called "cases" of a military

Another circumstance deserves attention. All the commanders of the armies and formations of the Red Army, reorganized after the defeats in June 1941, were approved by the Central Committee of the party when a decision was made on the nature of the charges against Pavlov. He was accused not of treason, but of military malfeasance. But I would like to note that Article 193 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR of those times, which provided grounds for prosecution for military crimes, was usually used by the authorities in a differentiated way. According to it, it was possible to condemn, sentence both to death and imprisonment. The trial of Pavlov and the whole tragedy of his position (the case was subsequently reviewed and Pavlov was posthumously rehabilitated) was that official omissions can be qualified and evaluated in different ways depending on "political expediency". I know that the question of Pavlov's fate was decided with hesitation and doubt. But not in terms of: guilty - not guilty, execute or pardon. Even fantastic proposals were made - to suspend the execution of the sentence, to save his life for use as a figurehead in the "imaginary" military opposition, which can be used for operational games with the Germans. Fedotov and Mikheev came out with such a proposal. To which Beria reacted negatively, citing the fact that such a significant figure as Pavlov, to connect to games with

the legend of the military opposition in the command staff of the Red Army will not work, and he will not report about this "upstairs".

We must not forget about one more circumstance. Pavlov, being the commander of the front, was not up to par, suffered a complete defeat. But it never occurred to him to surrender to the enemy, as Vlasov did. Here are two tragic fates.

Pavlov, who was completely devoted to Soviet power and remained a patriot of the Motherland. It was unthinkable for him to betray the Motherland as a result of a military defeat, and Vlasov, defeated by the enemy, surrendered due to cowardice, embarking on the path of treason and betrayal.

Chapter 12.

SPECIAL GROUP

Countering the onslaught of the Germans

The organization of the Special Group of the NKVDSSSR deserves special consideration. The fact is that in the difficult days of the last week of June and the beginning of July 1941, there was no complete clarity about its role in the structure of the security apparatus and the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. At first, we mistakenly believed that it was possible to create a reconnaissance and sabotage apparatus, relying only on the personnel of the intelligence department of the internal and border troops. Even before the creation of the Special

Group was formalized by order, on June 26, 1941, Eitingon and I were appointed deputy chief of staff of the NKVD to combat enemy paratroopers. It was meant to disrupt the actions of the sabotage units of the Abwehr, which were recorded in the front line and in our rear after unsuccessful battles in Belarus and the Baltic states.

In view of this, in a very short period, I had to devote the main attention to the development of extensive anti-sabotage work in transport and measures to search for saboteurs, especially on the railway and civil air fleet. A systematic detour of the routes and territories adjacent to the most important transport facilities was organized, it was supposed to create an agent-information network in settlements adjacent to railways, airfields, river ports, and to provide covert protection of objects. This system subsequently fully justified itself. Moreover, the bulk of anti-amphibious and sabotage intelligence was organized on the basis of the creation of special residencies, communications with operational services.

All this immediately reduced the scale of sabotage in railway transport, even under favorable conditions for the Germans to quickly seize our territory in the summer of 1941. Damage from landings and sabotage was minimized. The state security agencies were given the extremely important task of putting things in order in places of mass movement of passengers on railway tracks and stations. Under the strict, special control of the leadership of the NKVD was taken the schedule of trains and all transportation. Kobulov, being the Deputy People's Commissar of State Security, personally supervised their escort and even had his own office in the premises of the People's Commissariat of Railways. However, the enemy was very active. Despite the measures taken, the Germans managed to organize a total of up to 40 wrecks on railway transport in the summer-autumn period. But this did not entail the disorganization of transport.

In early July, it became quite obvious that the main theater of reconnaissance and sabotage operations against the Germans would be the territories of Belarus, Ukraine and the Baltic States captured by the enemy. There, in accordance with the well-known speech of Stalin on July 3, 1941, it was decided to create a special partisan front, therefore, all the functions of the Special Group of the NKVD, the creation of which was formalized by a special order on July 5, 1941, were subordinated to the solution of this task. It was at the first tragic stage of the war that the state security and internal affairs agencies played one of the leading, and in a number of areas the main role in the development of the partisan movement. And this was natural, since, unlike the party and economic activists, the NKVD bodies and their intelligence apparatus had been operating in a difficult operational situation in the border areas for more than two years, widely using the methods of secret work. They could be reoriented much faster to fighting the enemy, collecting intelligence, acting on his communications, bases, etc. This statement in no way contradicts or

refutes the rooted thesis about the leading role of the Communist Party in the deployment of guerrilla warfare. In the realities of the Soviet conditions of 1941-1945, it could not be otherwise. The CPSU (b) was not only a political party, but also the main governing structure in the mechanism of political and military power

in a country that manages and coordinates the actions of the Red Army units, the NKVD bodies and the party and economic activists who find themselves in the rear of the German troops.

Until recently, a lot of fabrications have been spread about the tasks of the Special Group. The Vaksbergs, Petrovs, Yakovlevs, Naumovs, defectors, some historians of Soviet intelligence who sympathize with them to manipulate falsified data, attribute to the Special Group the task of organizing terror in the territory occupied by the enemy, both against the occupation administration and its accomplices, and against the local population. This is done quite deliberately, for slanderous purposes. The authors deliberately do not cite and distort the documents that the authors have, often stolen from the archives of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the KGB of the USSR, about the real tasks of the fighters and employees of the Special Group of the NKVD.

A special group was formed on the basis of the first intelligence department of the NKGB-NKVD. Its backbone was made up of operational officers who had experience in intelligence work abroad and partisan operations during the Spanish Civil War. In connection with the occupation of our territories, we have become not only a body evaluating information about the situation in the occupied territory, but a unit coordinating the activities of local state security agencies.

In 1988, Major General N. Gubernatorov, formerly one of Yu. Andropov's assistants, gave me extracts from documents on the organization of the Special Group. In fact, it was an order about my appointment as the head of this unit and its tasks. Of course, it was extremely important for me to receive this document, which refuted the slanderous accusations of me and Eitingon, which was of decisive importance for our rehabilitation.

The Special Group was tasked with deploying a sabotage war in the occupied territory, in the front line and deep behind enemy lines. Specifically, this was expressed in the disabling of

important transport hubs, the disruption of railway and road transportation of enemy manpower and equipment to the front, the defeat of military, gendarmerie, police garrisons, the incapacitation

industrial enterprises, power plants, means of communication in the event of a threat of their capture by the enemy. The group was supposed to prevent the export to Germany of Soviet citizens, equipment, property looted by the Germans. An important direction of our work was the penetration into the special services of the enemy, the identification of their agents, thrown into our rear for the purpose of both collecting intelligence information and conducting sabotage. The group was also supposed to assist the party and Soviet activists in the deployment of a mass partisan movement and resistance behind enemy lines. We have at our

disposal the best specialists in the field of mine blasting in the Soviet Union, who worked not only in the system of the Red Army, but also in the people's commissariats of the coal industry, geology, and mining. Among them, I remember such brilliant masters of their craft as D. Ponomarev, G. Razzhivin. The graduates of the special school that existed in 1937-1938 under the Special Group of Serebryansky turned out to be very useful. Thanks to the students of this school, Lieutenant Colonel K. Kvashnin and the head of the department of operational equipment of the INO, Colonel A. Timashkov, our services were provided with advanced instruments and equipment that had no analogues in foreign sabotage special services. In

the shortest possible time, the main options for legendizing our agents for working behind enemy lines were worked out. We brought in our best intelligence and counterintelligence agents. Among them, I warmly remember E. Mitskevich, P. Zhuravlev, Z. Rybkina Voskresenskaya, V. Drozdov, G. Mordvinov, P. Gudimovich, his wife E. Mordzhinskaya, A. Kamaeva, V. Ilyin, Ya. Yakovlev, M. Maklyarsky, L. Stashko, N. Kiseleva, S. Okun, A. Krupennikov and some others. Five main options for

infiltration into the organs of the occupation administration, into the pro-fascist "volunteer" formations and into the German special services were developed. First legend. An officer

of the Red Army, captured during military clashes, gets to the enemy. Second. The Germans pick up a

wounded Soviet soldier or officer who was not provided with medical assistance.

Third. Officer or serviceman of the Red Army - deserter - surrenders to the Germans on the front line.

Fourth. A paratrooper of the Red Army, dropped behind enemy lines, voluntarily surrenders to the German military command. Fifth. A refugee of German origin, a Volksdeutsche, who crossed the front line into the occupied territory, offers his services to the Germans.

It should be noted that the legend of agents, which was successfully used to fight real and potential enemies of Soviet power, was not suitable for fighting the Nazis. It became quite obvious that it was impossible to use legends about any renegades from the inner-party opposition. To those who were related to the past leadership, even from the repressed, the Germans were treated with distrust. We learned about this from the information received from our task force in September from Kyiv. The occupiers, establishing a new order, in no case did not involve in their asset anyone from the category of the repressed, who were on political business as Trotskyists, left deviators.

Thus, the White Guard past of our agents and participation in imaginary nationalist organizations could be widely used to fight the enemy. Therefore, from a large number of operational cases, those that took place through the nationalist underground were singled out. It was with this legend that our people were sent to the Turkestan Legion. Developments related to the "Cossack underground" were also successful. Thanks to this, we were able to implement a number of major operations in 1942-1943, including such operations as "Basmachi", "School", "Monastery", "Couriers".

We knew that the Germans were looking for people who had suffered from Soviet power, and would seek, relying on them, to create their own network of agents and administration. Therefore, we left verified people from this category in the occupied territory. They became bait for the enemy and thus infiltrated the secret services and administration. And another, albeit small,

channel to the German special services is the use of the part of the German population that was not deported to Siberia, the so-called Volksdeutsche, who received a privileged position in the temporarily occupied territory.

Immediately after the creation of the Special Group, several training schools were organized. One school of individual training was located on the basis of our rest home in Kratov, the other - in the intelligence school - SHON in Balashikha.

It was also important for us to use political emigrants through the Comintern. In this regard, I repeatedly visited Dimitrov, Dolores Ibarruri. The training of these personnel was led by Comrade "Ferdinand", the former head of counterintelligence of the Republican Spain from Barcelona. He selected people who underwent special training in the Ozery area on Kaluga Highway, the former dacha of Yagoda, which later became the Rest House of the Central Committee of the CPSU. A few words about the structure of the Special

Group, which was transformed on October 3, 1941 into the 2nd independent department of the NKVD of the USSR, which became an operational unit coordinating the activities of all other services of the state security agencies. The Special Group was subordinated directly to the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs Beria.

On August 26, 1941, the operational groups of the local state security agencies, which were engaged in organizing the fight against the enemy in the front line, were transformed into the 4th departments of the NKVD UNKVD of the republics, front-line territories and regions and became subordinate to the Special Group. Their duties included: -

- daily control over the formation of fighter battalions, partisan detachments and sabotage groups, leadership in coordination with the Center of their combat activities;
- establishing links with the destruction

- battalions that have switched to the position of partisan detachments, as well as existing partisan detachments and sabotage groups located behind enemy lines;

- organization of undercover and military reconnaissance in the areas of operations of partisan detachments and sabotage groups;

- reconnaissance of the rear of the enemy and places of possible crossing partisan detachments;

- providing partisan formations with weapons and ammunition for combat operations, as well as food, clothing and other equipment.

The directive of the NKVD also entrusted the 4th departments with the duty of interrogating prisoners, defectors, paratroopers and saboteurs captured by state security agencies and the Red Army.

In connection with the expansion of the scope of work after the reorganization, the Special Group consisted of the secretariat and 16 departments and departments of the territorial NKVD-UNKVD that were under its operational subordination. 14 departments of the central apparatus were operational regional divisions. They were engaged in organizing reconnaissance and sabotage work in Ukraine, in Belarus, the Baltic states, as well as abroad and in areas of a possible enemy attack - Japan, Turkey, Scandinavia, Iran. To actively counter the subversive activities of the special services of fascist Germany, a special department was created in the 2nd department for work in the front-line zone. And, most importantly, it coordinated its activities with the military counterintelligence apparatus - special departments of the Red Army. The regulation on our activities was approved by the leadership of the NKVD. Here are the tasks that were set before us: - the formation of illegal residencies in large settlements captured by the enemy and the provision of reliable communications

with them;

- restoration of contacts with the valuable proven agents of the state security agencies that remained on the temporarily occupied Soviet territory;

- the introduction of verified agents into organizations created by the enemy on the captured territory, intelligence, counterintelligence and administrative bodies;

- selection and transfer of qualified agents to the occupied territory with a view to their further penetration

- into Germany and other European countries; - sending route agents to the occupied regions with reconnaissance and special assignments; - preparation and deployment behind enemy lines of special reconnaissance and sabotage

- groups subordinate to the Center to carry out missions of particular importance, ensuring reliable communication with

them;

- mining by order of the Headquarters and the State Defense Committee of industrial enterprises and strategic facilities in order to disable them in areas under the threat of enemy invasion;
- organization of residencies in these areas from among the dedicated and proven employees in operational work; - providing reconnaissance and sabotage groups, single agents, special couriers with weapons, ammunition, food, equipment and communications and relevant cover documents.

In this regard, it should be noted that the troops of the Special Group of the NKVD, which received the name of the Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade for Special Purposes (OMSBON) in October 1941, were part of the active Red Army in October-December 1941, that is, they were not only subordinate to the Special groups, the leadership of the NKVD, but were also special forces under the jurisdiction of the General Staff of the Red Army and, consequently, the High Command. On August 26, 1941, i.e., a month

and a half after the creation of the Special Group, the order of the People's Commissariat determined the procedure for interaction with it of operational, technical and military units and formations of state security and internal affairs bodies. To this it should be added that the Special Group - the 2nd Department of the NKVD - was the only unit that was not evacuated from Moscow to Kuibyshev, in connection with the redeployment of the state security apparatus in October 1941. Our employees and fighters of the OMSBON were fully deployed and fully involved in the days of the decisive events of the battle near Moscow. During the battle near Moscow, the specific combat missions assigned to us by the Supreme Command

and the leadership of the NKVD were finally determined. Focus on the collection and transfer of intelligence data to the command of the Red Army through the NKVD: - on the deployment, strength and armament of military

formations and units of the enemy;

- about the locations of headquarters, airfields, warehouses and bases with weapons, ammunition and fuel; - on the construction of defensive structures;

- about the regime of political and economic measures German command and occupation administration. In the field of sabotage activities: - disruption of the work of the railway and automobile transport, disruption of regular transportation behind enemy lines; - disabling military and industrial facilities, headquarters, warehouses and bases of weapons, ammunition, fuel and lubricants, food and other property; - violation of the communication line on railway, highway and unpaved roads, communication centers and power plants in cities and other facilities.

In the line of counterintelligence work (together with special departments of the Red Army):

- to establish the locations of reconnaissance, sabotage and punitive bodies of the German special services, agent training schools, their structure, strength, agent training systems, penetration routes into Red Army units and formations, partisan detachments and the Soviet rear; - to identify enemy agents prepared for being thrown or

abandoned in the Soviet rear, as well as left in the rear of the Soviet troops after the retreat of the German army; - establish methods of communication between enemy agents and his

intelligence

centers; - to carry out systematic work on the decomposition of units formed from Red Army soldiers who voluntarily went over to the side of the enemy, prisoners of war and forcibly mobilized residents of the occupied territories;

- to protect partisan detachments from the penetration of enemy agents into them, to carry out the elimination of the most dangerous accomplices of the enemy and, if possible, representatives of the occupation administration responsible for punitive actions (fascist authorities and military command) in relation to partisans and the local population.

The beginning of the creation of residencies and battle groups in the occupied territory

Being together with L. Eitingon, N. Melnikov, V. Gridnev, M. Orlov, V. Drozdov, M. Maklyarsky, Ya. Serebryansky, L. Stashko as leaders of the organization of combat work behind enemy lines at the beginning of the war, we acted as a well-coordinated team. The leadership of specific operations and our initiative were manifested within the framework of the tasks set before us by the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs Beria. I cannot fail to note that clear and highly competent instructions came from him. However, this was not due to the fact that he had a fantastic special gift of foresight. Beria was, of course, a large, outstanding personality. Another thing is also important, as a member of the GKO, he had access to comprehensive military information. From him, for example, we received a valuable order when creating underground groups in the occupied territory - to sharply intensify reconnaissance work in the southern direction. Beria proceeded from the fact that the Germans would definitely try to use Odessa, Nikolaev and other major port cities as transit points for the export of raw materials to Turkey, especially in the event of a successful development of their operations in the Middle East. Then, in a hurry, we staffed residencies in

Odessa, Nikolaev and then in Kyiv.

They had to monitor how ports and water transport are used, disable shipyards, and do everything so that the grain captured by the enemy does not go through these ports for the needs of the German army. V. Molodtsov (Badaev), who

headed the residency in Odessa, was supposed to leave two or three groups of the most trusted and reliable people in the city to carry out special sabotage operations, as well as to eliminate prominent representatives of the German administration, traitors who collaborated with the Germans. The choice of Molodtsov, despite his lack of experience in foreign intelligence, was generally justified. On the eve of the war, he was the curator of the "Romanian" direction in its central office. Our special instruction was to under no circumstances decipher these people to anyone. Agents were forbidden to contact the employees of the UNKVD, i.e., local authorities,

remaining behind German lines. It was also their duty to check again the agents left in case of withdrawal, especially the Germans, even those who had been working with us for many years. I categorically objected to connections with agents from among the Germans who were not expelled in the first days of the war. We could not allow the numerous German colonies to become a support for the occupation administration. In addition, there were many ambiguities with the use of agents from the former Volga German Republic. In any case, the bitterness of the war and the occupation dictated to us the possibility of using agents of German nationality in exceptional cases. There could be no question of the mass use of these people. The question of the

interaction of the Special Group with the territorial bodies arose very sharply. I remember that I signed a special instruction addressed to the NKVD department for the Odessa region, which spoke of the need to decentralize special residencies and groups left for underground work. From the memorandum that we received, it was read that when creating an undercover apparatus for the underground, completely undesirable centralization was allowed, which could lead to failures. The group in Nikolaev was led by the former deputy head of the Anglo-American

department and scientific and technical intelligence of the NKVD V. Lyagin, the future Hero of the Soviet Union. He went behind enemy lines on his own initiative. Since Lyagin had previously worked in the United States, he did not have sufficient experience in counterintelligence work, but he was eager to distinguish himself in the war. He was driven by fearlessness. He left his family, all his privileges as an executive, even his

personal car, which was a rarity at that time, which he brought from abroad. Despite my objections, he got an appointment with Beria and personally signed a report with the leadership of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs about sending him as a resident to Nikolaev on the eve of the occupation of the city. Lyagin justified his decision by the fact that only a person with good engineering training can lead the residency of large port areas captured by the enemy. He had such training. However, we strongly objected to this, knowing that he was quite thorough

aware of the work of our intelligence behind the cordon. And the appointment of such a person for a risky business was contrary to our basic principles and rules for the use of personnel.

Other goals were set for the group of I. Kudri (Maxim), who was left as our illegal resident in Kyiv. The group was supposed to infiltrate the Ukrainian nationalist underground, on which the German command made a serious bet. In recent years, after graduating from the border school, Kudrya fought against Ukrainian nationalists and knew well the features and specifics of this movement. Having worked as part of our task force in Lvov, he was engaged in developing links between Ukrainian nationalists and German intelligence agencies. He was a young, capable, energetic worker. In addition, which is very important, Kudrya was not known to wide circles of the Ukrainian party and Soviet activists, since he did not have to work in a leadership position in the NKVD. Fate pushed him with an emergency, which was later borrowed by the authors of the famous film "The Feat of the

Scout". It contains an episode when a Soviet intelligence officer meets a German intelligence officer Stübing at the Ars cinema, who managed to escape. In October 1941, Kudrya ran into Khreshchatyk with a prominent figure in the underground Ukrainian organization, which he had been involved with even before the war. This doppelgänger, recruited by Maxim, managed to get out of our control in 1940, and when the war began, he expected that due to the rapid advance of the German armies, his star would rise. But when he ran into Maxim on the street, the agent was very scared. He could, of course, organize the liquidation of Kudri, but then his German masters would have to be involved in this. And he, fearing exposure, was forced to cooperate with us again. Subsequently, he took Maxim to the Abwehr safe houses in Kyiv.

Unfortunately, Kudrya became a victim of a set-up and died heroically in 1942, without betraying anyone. In 1965 he was posthumously awarded the title of Hero of

the Soviet Union. It is time to tell about the betrayal of his agent, a certain V. Kartashov, aka A. Kovalenko. He was a lawyer, in 1937 he was convicted of negligence and forgery for five years in prison. In 1939

year he was released, began to cooperate with the NKVD of Ukraine. In connection with the occupation of Kyiv, he was left behind enemy lines to perform special tasks under the guise of the owner of a commission shop and restaurant. German counterintelligence soon arrested and recruited him. He betrayed a group of underground workers. After the war in May 1945, during the audit, specific facts and circumstances of his betrayal were revealed. He was arrested and sentenced to 25 years in prison for treacherous collaboration with the enemy. Later, our

famous writer V. Kataev in the novel "For the Power of the Soviets" used a number of moments from the biography of Kovalenko in the image of the owner of a thrift store in occupied Odessa, M. Kolesnichuk, an employee of the residency of Molodtsov - "Badaev". In the novel, Kataev gave him the surname Druzhinin. The first

attempt to create a major residency in Western Ukraine, in Zhytomyr, ended unsuccessfully for us. I. Kaminsky, an experienced operative, was sent there, an illegal INO in the 30s, released at my insistence from prison after the start of the war. He flew to communicate with our agent - a local priest. But immediately after landing, he was ambushed. By this time, the priest had been recruited by German counterintelligence. Kaminsky shot himself, realizing that he had fallen into a trap. The fate of Kaminsky especially worries me even now. He was my personal friend. Bypassing me, he achieved, just like Lyagin, Merkulov's permission to land behind enemy lines. Unfortunately, incompetent people confuse him with Yan Kaminsky, a fighter of the task force of our legendary militant intelligence agent N. Kuznetsov, who died with him in 1944 at the hands of OUN bandits. I cannot but be puzzled by the false version that leaked out with the knowledge of a number of consultant historians of our intelligence that Ivan Nikolaevich Kaminsky "died in battle with partisans." Thus, the cynical authors of his corrected biography close the issue of posthumously awarding this hero of the secret war, who was unjustly repressed in 1938.

All four residencies of the first period of the war that I have named tragically perished. Our people, who participated in the reconnaissance and sabotage struggle against the enemy, held out in general for about a year. This, unfortunately, in urban conditions is the average duration in the rear

The legendary N. Kuznetsov operated for a sabotage years group. He relied on the powerful support and assistance of the partisan detachment and the entire operational group of D. Medvedev, successfully using the network of its agents. Among the unknown dead heroes of the secret war behind enemy lines, Lyagin's deputy for

sabotage work, an employee of the NKVD of Ukraine N. Sidorchuk, should be mentioned. He personally organized and carried out sabotage at a German airfield, as a result of which 24 enemy aircraft were destroyed. Sidorchuk deserved the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, but, unfortunately, my submission on this score was not supported. After the end of the war, he was posthumously awarded only the Order of the Red Banner. This is explained by the fact that in such episodes, in which Sidorchuk turned out to be a participant, awards were accepted only after a special investigation team checked the real circumstances of the death of our people. It must be said that among those who were sent behind enemy lines, there were those who evaded this. So, for example, the graduation of the School for Special Purposes was completely transferred to my disposal. But a

number of people, using the support of their relatives who were in leadership positions in the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and in the Council of People's Commissars, in particular N. A. Egurnov, refused to lead the task forces sent to the Smolensk region. Moreover, they motivated their refusal by the fact that flying behind enemy lines is a voluntary matter. And behind their backs they said that people were "thrown into the fire without any insurance." But there were few of them.

The fact that a fierce war was going on, which required colossal self-sacrifice, was clear to everyone. But some had the courage to go behind enemy lines and, possibly, to death, others did not have it.

enough.

Among those who in 1941 assumed the heavy responsibility of deploying intelligence work behind German lines was L. Stashko, a veteran of our intelligence who had experience in Spain and Western Europe. For some time he was engaged in the preparation of documents related to the instructions of Marshal Zhukov on raids on German communications in October-December 1941. Then Stashko became the head of the organization of sabotage work in Ukraine.

It should be noted that people of the younger generation who found themselves in the central apparatus in July-October 1941, such as G. Rogatnev, S. Volokitin, F. Bakin, were actively involved in the work of the Special Group - 2nd Department. And, finally, the graduates of the School of Special Purposes did a great and interesting job in case it was necessary to create a Moscow underground. These are V. Ivanov, I. Shchors, P. Massya, A. Shitov (Alekseev), later our first ambassador to Cuba. We

need to single out another group connected to help us. It should be noted A. Sverdlov, the son of the first chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, who for some time led a group of secret staff of our apparatus. He was attracted and accepted into the secret staff of the NKVD by special agent A. Granovsky, the son of a major leader of the Council of People's Commissars, who was repressed in 1937. He was recalled from the MPVO and planned to be used as a special agent in Poland, since he spoke foreign languages. Granovsky, who did well during the war years, fled to the British in 1947, while on a business trip abroad in Sweden through the 2nd Directorate of the MGB.

In accordance with the order, the secret political department of N. Gorlinsky provided us with great assistance in using agents against Germans from among the children and relatives of those who were repressed in 1937-1938. Working with this category, we called a significant number of people to serve in the Special Group. At the same time, I met with full understanding from the leadership, despite the fact that it was not easy to get a sanction for this case, because in fact we were taking risks, and to a large extent this was an exam in the work of counterintelligence. The first children of the repressed came to us at the stage of the formation of the troops of the Special Group at the Dynamo stadium. In October 1941, within the framework of the 2nd department, a special branch was created for a secret staff. It was headed at the beginning by M. Maklyarsky, later by D. Medvedev. The department directly supervised special agents who underwent strictly individual training. It was necessary to raise their level, turn them from informers into operational officers. Over time, they received officer ranks, became the owners of new biographies, which were suitable only in emergency circumstances of the deployment of hostilities. Of course, in peacetime, the use of such

apparatus is strictly regulated and subordinated to the solution of other tasks.

We also tried to involve the children of the repressed Chekists in our work. One of our operatives, Sergei Samoilovich Denotkin, was the son of the head of the NKVD department for the Volga German Republic, later he became an assistant to the head of the department of the central apparatus of the NKVD of the USSR. Moloch of repressions at one time most mercilessly destroyed the KGB cadres: his mother and father were shot. Denotkin led one of our operational battle groups in occupied Borisov. I very successfully selected an operational wife for him, and they successfully operated behind enemy lines for more than two years. Undoubtedly, this work was associated with great risk. And we must pay tribute to Beria, Merkulov and Kobulov, who authorized the use of such people, who made a significant contribution to the Victory. Thanks to them, we got a great opportunity to identify agents, methods and methods of work of German intelligence. Having the relevant documents in their hands, they appeared at the local German administration, at the commandant's office, and, naturally, rubbed themselves into the confidence of the German authorities. Another example is the heroic combat path behind enemy lines of a soldier of our task force V. Gorshkov, whose father, a prominent military worker, was repressed and shot in 1937.

When recruiting reconnaissance and sabotage and operational groups, I tried to select those who knew how to work with agents. Here, of course, the role of the most experienced specialists in our business, called up from the reserve and returned after repression, was invaluable, such as the former head of the Eastern Department of the INO, released on our initiative with Eitingon M. Yarikov, P. Zubov, Ya. Serebryansky, illegal F Parparov. And, of course, Maklyarsky, Staszko and P. Gudimovich stood in the forefront. But there is another important circumstance to be noted. War, of course, is a test, a severe test of blood, with great sacrifices and losses. But at the same time, the war, and especially

its first year, was a period of exceptional patriotic impulse, and there was no reason to doubt the sincerity of people, devotion to our cause. However, so to speak, a generalized, short attestation: devoted to the cause of the Communist Party of Lenin-Stalin, the Soviet

Devoted to the motherland, as applied to agents, it was certainly insufficient. We needed to have a clearer detailed assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the agent in order to determine its capabilities, in which direction it could be effectively used.

As for the operational groups abandoned behind enemy lines, it must be said that already in August we set a goal - the creation of pockets of resistance, on the basis of which intelligence and operational work and reconnaissance and sabotage activities would be established. In this regard, it is necessary to note the very successful work done by the task force of P. Flegontov, which prepared a solid and expanded base for the first raid of the Medvedev detachment into the Kletnyansky forests near Bryansk to create a small base partisan area there. This experience has been very helpful to us.

The second point related to the activities of the Flegontov task force is the preparation of a base partisan area on the territory of the Smolensk region. The operational group, operating from August to October 1941, was able to effectively cope with the task, also because its commander had extensive experience as a member of the partisan movement in the Far East. Flegontov tested the tactics of action in ambushes, carrying out several sabotage. All this was in demand when creating in Tula a powerful training center for partisan

movement.

Another important area of our work deserves attention - the study of the territories immediately adjacent to military operations, and, in particular, the sending of our operational group headed by I. Radoinov to Bulgaria. One part of the group was transported in a submarine, the other was dropped with parachutes. The plans were very big, and we discussed them with Dimitrov. This meant a combination of legal and illegal forms of struggle in Bulgaria, taking into account the fact that our intelligence had fairly strong positions there and even access to government circles. And not only the military, but also the foreign intelligence of the NKVD.

Radoinov was supposed to be the coordinator of these actions. But, unfortunately, we overestimated our capabilities and did not take into account the activity of the counterintelligence services of Bulgaria, supported by the Germans.

Radoinov's group was revealed very soon. The enemy purposefully led her search, knowing that he was hunting for messengers abandoned from Moscow. Dimitrov's idea of putting at the head of the underground a man who had been trained at our military academy and who had experience in intelligence work was, in principle, correct. But, unfortunately, the circumstances were not in our favor, and this group died heroically, becoming a well-known symbol of steadfastness in the fight against fascism, but no significant information about the situation in Bulgaria was received. In addition, the group was unable to influence the political situation.

Sadly, we have to admit that attempts both in Berlin and in Sofia to activate the underground through military intelligence and the NKVD by sending messengers failed, ended tragically.

In the autumn of 1941, we streamlined the information and analytical work of the Special Group - 2nd Division. This direction was headed by a veteran of the INO D. Fedichkin and E. Mordzhinskaya. I signed a special instruction to the territorial and front-line state security agencies specifying the nature of the intelligence information submitted to the Center. In practice, this was an addition to the instructions that appeared back in April 1941. Reconnaissance on the ground was ordered to more accurately present data on the presence and condition of railway structures in the rear of the Germans, their technical parameters and design features, description of warehouses, their locations, to link with the amount of materials stored in them, ammunition, fuel. Particular attention was paid to the need to obtain information about the workshops, factories, airfields, telegraph and telephone lines, military installations being restored by the Germans, the construction of new fortifications, and about all construction work in the territories they occupied. The order also set the task of finding out whether the Germans were destroying our old fortified areas or adapting them for fighting, and how they were doing it. The last item was introduced at the insistence of the Intelligence Department of the General Staff. August and autumn of 1941 are significant

in that the first experience of fighting behind enemy lines was gained. The NKVD special forces completed their formation, which will be discussed below. Successful results in

defensive battle for Moscow allowed us to quickly
develop a clear concept of measures for the development of guerrilla
movements And organizations reconnaissance and sabotage
activities. In November 1941, it became quite clear that
due to mass resistance behind enemy lines, it develops
a favorable basis for fighting on his communications and disrupting
German intelligence operations against the Red Army.

Chapter

13

Awareness of the need for guerrilla action

On July 18, 1941, the resolution of the Central Committee of the party "On the organization of the struggle in the rear of the Nazi troops" was adopted. In connection with the preparation of this decision, I, as the head of the Special Group under the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, was summoned to a meeting at the Central Committee of the Party. Beria, Merkulov, Ponomarenko, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus, as well as representatives of the Central Committee of the Communist Parties of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia participated in it, chaired by Malenkov.

Ponomarenko immediately set the tone and raised the question not only of organizing a partisan movement, but also of taking all the territory occupied by the enemy out of control and thus disorganizing his rear. In the resolution of the Central

Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, it was written that the state security agencies play an important role in ensuring the broad development of the partisan movement, in organizing combat squads, sabotage groups, which should be organized from among the participants in the civil war, those who have already proven themselves in the extermination

battalions. Their leadership was entrusted to the organs of the NKVD and the NKGB. These same groups were supposed to include communists, Komsomol members who are not used to work in party and Komsomol cells. In the resolution prepared with our participation, it was said that in order to organize underground communist cells, the most staunch leading party, Soviet and Komsomol cadres devoted to Soviet power, Soviet non-party comrades, were sent to lead the partisan movement and sabotage work in areas captured by the enemy,

familiar with the conditions of the areas where they were to work. It meant that the apparatus of the district committees of the party, the NKVD and the NKGB was the only one who

knew the situation and personnel. At this meeting, I insisted that the resolution should note that the deportation to the occupied regions must be carefully prepared, clandestine, and that each group should not exceed five people. The sent people could be associated with only one specific person and in no case should they contact each other.

The selection of personnel for the underground apparatus was determined by the close interaction of party organs and operatives of the NKVD. An acute question arose about the use of participants in the civil war, those who proved themselves in the destruction battalions and in the partisan detachments that had just been created, mainly in Belarus.

Experienced personnel were called up from the reserve of the NKVD, such as the future honorary state security officer, one of the heads of the department of the sabotage and intelligence service G. Mordvinov, who personally knew many participants in the partisan movement during the civil war, especially in the Far East. There was a real opportunity to bring up personnel completely unknown to the enemy, which was very important, because we knew that the Abwehr and the Gestapo had information about our party activists. So, one of the secretaries of the Nikolaev regional committee of the CP (b) U Yarov, having with him lists of some underground organizations, was captured by the Abwehr team at the moment when the question of creating our residency in southern Ukraine was being decided. As a result, the party activists and the underground from the very beginning, for the most part, were in the hands of the Nazis. Therefore, we constantly reminded the leaders of all residencies of the need to rely extremely carefully on the local asset that remained in the zone of German-

Romanian occupation. I would like to note one more point in the resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks on the organization of the partisan movement. This document emphasized that the recruitment work in the partisan detachments is entirely

transferred to the disposal and under the responsibility of the NKVD. It is necessary to clarify one more fundamental issue. We are talking about allegedly

through party organs in the border regions of the Soviet Union in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Indeed, preparatory measures for organizing a guerrilla war in the west of the country were carried out during this period. However, at that time, options for conducting sabotage work were calculated in connection with a possible complication of the socio-political situation in Poland, Romania, the Baltic states, but not in any way conducting it on our territory. The General Staff and the command of the Red Army (this, by the way, is mentioned in notes addressed to M. Tukhachevsky) gave orders to lay weapons and ammunition in caches for the successful conduct of partisan operations, bearing in mind that Poland would be the main enemy on the Western Front, to which, Perhaps Germany will join. For stockpiling, the experience of the partisan movement and sabotage operations carried out in the 1920s in Eastern Poland was taken into account.

When in 1941, with the participation of veterans of these partisan actions, the future Heroes of the Soviet Union S. Vaupshasov, N. Prokopyuk, K. Orlovsky, we analyzed these plans, it turned out that they were completely inadequate to the situation that had developed by that time. The border configuration has changed. And perhaps most importantly, an unfavorable socio-political situation has developed in the regions of Western Belarus, the Baltic states and in the former territories of Poland that have gone to us. Anti-Soviet sentiments and opposition were strong here.

As you know, an example of mass courage and heroism was the partisan movement in Belarus, which from the very beginning of the war was headed by the first secretary of the Central Committee of the VKB (b) of Belarus P. Ponomarenko (by the way, the only one of the first secretaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Parties of the union republics). Ponomarenko understood that the creation of an agent is the most scale of the apparatus important condition for ensuring the operational partisan movement.

Already in July 1941, a partisan detachment under the command of the deputy head of the 1st department of the secret political department of the NKGB of Belarus N. Morozkin, who had complete information about everything that was happening in the occupied territories, was actively operating behind enemy lines in Belarus. The detachment was in the area of Bobruisk for a long time. Basically these were

NKGB operatives, NKVD and police officers. On July 22, 1941, it was reported that there were 74 people in the detachment, including many employees of the Bobruisk city department of the NKVD, under the command of senior lieutenant of state security Zalogin, the same Zalogin who carried out the first sabotage operations: he blew up bridges near Gomel and on the Slutsk highway. An employee of this operational group, P. Filimonov, who underwent a rather humiliating procedure of special checks, after leaving the enemy rear, became one of the directives of our service for work behind enemy lines.

We received information that near Bobruisk, the successful actions of the partisans on the communications of the Germans led to their significant losses. Explosions of bridges, railway tracks - all this brought down the offensive of the Nazis, significantly hampered their advance. This confirmed the correctness of our assumptions regarding sabotage on their communications. Gaining time was of paramount importance then. By July 8, 15 partisan

detachments were formed in the Pinsk region. They were headed by Soviet leaders and Chekists. One of them - Korzh - became a Hero of the Soviet Union. 12 detachments were commanded by NKVD workers - heads of district departments and their deputies, head of the passport police department, NKVD operatives. These people were well aware of the local situation, the cadres of the agents, they had a good idea of the anti-Soviet element that had embarked on the path of cooperation with the enemy. As already mentioned,

when selecting partisan detachment commanders for the post, first of all, their past activities were taken into account. First of all, commanders who had combat experience were appointed. N. Prokopyuk, A. Rabtsevich, S. Vaupshasov, K. Orlovsky - all of them not only participated in the guerrilla war against the White Poles in the 1920s, but also fought in Spain. There was a large group in the reserve that fought in the Far East. In practice, the repressions of the late 30s did not affect specialists in sabotage equipment and instruments. All of them were actively involved. As for the situation in Ukraine, it was not entirely

successful. S. Kovpak and N. Fedorov, who created large partisan formations in the forests on the basis of the Soviet party activists,

were isolated pockets of resistance. The mass partisan movement in Ukraine unfolded only in 1942.

At the initial stage of the war, the organization of the partisan movement was conceived as the creation of a second front operating in the rear of the Germans. His main task was to slow down the pace of the advance and advance of the fascist troops. In this connection, the experience of leading the partisan movement in Byelorussia is instructive. The first directive of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus on the deployment of a partisan movement behind enemy lines appeared on July 1, 1941, even before the adoption of the resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks "On organizing the struggle in the rear of the Nazi troops". And the note of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Belarus Ponomarenko in August 1941 addressed to Stalin characterized him as a broad-minded person who knew how to set the most serious tasks. Ponomarenko referred to the positive experience of attacking the rear of the enemy, emphasizing, for example, that when tanks, which are a formidable weapon for us, are transported by echelon, they can be put out of action as a result of successful sabotage on the railway by two or three

Ponomarenko came up with the idea of creating a system of education and training, attracting the most qualified people to conduct special operations on enemy communications.

In Ponomarenko's note, measures were named that became very effective in the partisan movement, though not in the form of its organization, but in the modern equipment for that time with the means of mine-sabotage warfare. Ponomarenko wrote that very skillful and well-versed leaders, whom he personally saw in action, emerged. Divisional Commissar Tumanyan, Colonel Mamsurov. Captain Potrokhaltsev, one of the future leaders of the Intelligence Department of the General Staff of the Red Army, and the organizer of the sabotage school of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Belarus, Colonel I. Starinov, was also named.

Ponomarenko suggested creating 12-15 sabotage schools with a ten-day course of practical training, where explosive equipment would be made in the workshops. Each school planned to train 500 people. Every day, 50 people would graduate from one school. Of the graduates, over a hundred sabotage groups could be completed. For starters, Ponomarenko wrote, it would be

very handy. "I ask you to pay attention to this matter and help him," Ponomarenko wrote to Stalin, "the results will exceed all expectations."

The school of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Belarus, located in the city of Orel, as having accumulated experience, Ponomarenko proposed to make it central for the training of instructors-saboteurs and transfer it to the Bryansk Front. It is necessary to prepare saboteurs not only to be sent to the rear, but also to work in the front-line areas in the zone of 100-150 kilometers from the front. Ponomarenko argued that saboteurs trained by the school act most reliably, the percentage of their combat missions being completed ranges from 50 to 60 percent. In addition, girls, women and teenagers, the elderly, i.e. groups of the local population, to which the enemy does not pay much attention, are very suitable for this type of work, in his opi

It is curious that at first the sabotage operations were supposed to be carried out with the help of signalers, who it was decided to send to the rear of the Germans. As early as July, a special directive from the People's Commissar of State Security appeared to the effect that signalers should be organized from among the trusted people who were loyal to us, as well as from among the agents who could not be used for more active purposes. Remaining on the territory of the enemy, they had to use all means available to them - rockets, bonfires, turning on the lights at night - during our air raids, give light signals, thereby indicating the location of especially important enemy targets.

During the same period, a directive was issued on special actions at enemy airfields. It said that the rapid advance of the German troops would inevitably entail the redeployment of aircraft. Airfields known to us became the object of sabotage work. In September-October 1941, it became obvious that

the presence of partisan formations behind enemy lines is extremely effective, since they and sabotage groups divert large military formations. Therefore, in the General Staff and in the NKVD, they were inclined to believe that the emerging resistance movement behind enemy lines, as of the autumn of 1941, should be considered as a special front of struggle on the communications lines of the Nazi troops. This very important conclusion was made by the Deputy Chief

operational management of the General Staff at that time, Major General A. Vasilevsky. Then Ponomarenko and Beria raised the question before Stalin about the interaction of the operations of partisan detachments with the defending and counterattacking Red Army. At that time, we discussed such

issues already at the level of the General Staff and the NKVD, Popov and Malenkov in the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, whom Stalin instructed to do this.

The partisan movement was strong not only because it had a popular character, but also because of its organization. The Germans, despite the ongoing punitive operations, failed to suppress it. They failed to strike at the very core of the resistance. Without the elimination of the organizational basis of the partisan movement, its headquarters, the leadership of our operational groups, individual prominent leaders, it was impossible to count on success in suppressing partisan detachments. As is known, the

resistance of the nationalists in the Baltic States and Western Ukraine after the Great Patriotic War ceased only when their headquarters were liquidated and destroyed. We were able to do this with the help of undercover penetration into their leading organizations, thanks to inciting internal contradictions. In addition, we managed to take control of the main lines of communication between the nationalist underground and foreign centers that supported it ideologically and materially. Without this, there could be no talk of stabilizing the situation and peaceful life in Western Ukraine and the Baltic states.

The Difficult Tasks of Organizing a Fight Behind Enemy Lines

The organization of reconnaissance and sabotage activities in connection with the rapid advance of the enemy required, first of all, a balanced approach, although this had to be done in an extremely short time. A clear inconsistency was revealed in the delimitation of functions between the military counterintelligence agencies and us. Military counterintelligence contributed- abandonment

sabotage groups in the front line. For this, she had great opportunities. But the whole burden of organizing the movement and reconnaissance peripheral and sabotage partisan activities on the basis of the services of the NKVD and the agents that remained in the occupied territory fell on the shoulders of the apparatus of the Special Group - the 2nd department of the NKVD.

First of all, it was necessary to establish the use of agents behind enemy lines in order to establish which zones of the territories occupied by him were under his control. By this

time, we and military intelligence had finally revealed the enemy's plan for a "blitzkrieg". The question arose very sharply of how to take advantage of the failure of Hitler's plans to inflict maximum damage on the enemy. From the materials coming from the regional departments, the district administrations of the NKVD, a rather unexpected picture has developed. We also analyzed the information that we received from formations and units leaving the environment. Our communication with them was extremely important. We not only filtered these people, cutting off hostile agents, but also learned about the situation in the occupied area. It turned out that part of the areas occupied by the enemy were not actually under his temporary or permanent control. In this regard, Eitingon made an important proposal, which was actively supported by the General Staff, - to prepare a special map of the territories occupied by the enemy for the leadership of the NKVD and the High Command, which would give an idea of the actual operational situation that developed there. Our officers, together with the General Staff dispatchers, identified three groups of areas occupied

by the enemy. The first included the places where the communications and supply centers of the advancing German army were located. They were under the incomplete control of the enemy and were a very vulnerable target, as communications were stretched. The Germans could not provide protection for the movement of goods along the entire length of the railways, especially in columns with tanks or armored vehicles. Curfews have not been introduced everywhere.

The second category is the deep areas of the countryside, which were generally outside the zone of enemy control. They were

removed from the main roads and communications, which created a favorable situation for the deployment of a broad partisan movement. But most importantly, in the future they were an excellent base for organizing the supply of partisan formations, as well as storing weapons and ammunition.

The third group - mainly large settlements - was under close control of the German troops. In these areas, a strict counterintelligence regime was introduced, constant surveillance of the local population. German soldiers did not appear on the streets alone. Although the cars with the management staff moved, as a rule, without protection.

Given these conditions, we had to determine the main targets for strikes, as well as those areas where it was possible to organize the verification and retraining of our agents.

We managed to reveal a number of features in the actions of the enemy. For example, the German command made serious miscalculations. Their troops moved along the main roads, while not controlling the side ones. Positions were clumsily chosen when crossing wooded and swampy areas. Gradually, it became clear to us how to create an unbearable

regime for the enemy, not to give him rest day or night. It was decided that it would be preferable to carry out raids on enemy formations after 18-19 pm, before dark, to leave the battlefield under the cover of night, to actively use mining and blockages during withdrawal, to adapt our actions depending on the seasons, especially the approaching winter. We drew conclusions about the nature of partisan actions on Lesistaya

territory Belarus. terrain Very
favored exploration. Belarus and the Smolensk direction have become the main testing ground for the deployment of reconnaissance and sabotage work. And not by accident. The fate of Moscow, the main goal of the Nazi blitzkrieg, was being decided. August and September 1941

can be called a turning point in the formation of the partisan movement. The fact is that Ponomarenko, who correctly raised the issue of organizing sabotage work behind enemy lines, thanks to which

the potential of the intelligence department of the General Staff and the NKVD, unfortunately, was mistaken about the fact that mass partisan armies could be formed behind enemy lines.

I took part in several meetings on this subject both in the Central Committee, and in the General Staff, and with Beria in the NKVD. The talk about the formation of mass guerrilla armies behind enemy lines made a depressing impression on me. Our military command, especially veterans of the civil war, did not imagine all the advantages in equipping the German army, the capabilities of its aviation compared to partisans armed only with small arms. To talk about the creation of mass partisan armies that would not even have artillery support, appropriate technical means for waging war, was, at least, not serious. An important problem for us was the provision of partisans with weapons. In the territory occupied by the enemy, we lost a large number of warehouses with ammunition and fuel and lubricants.

We had to undermine a significant number of them during the retreat, since there was no way to take them out

possibilities.

Nevertheless, an organized front of armed struggle gradually took shape behind enemy lines. We, through the NKVD, with great effort, gradually worked out a system of interaction for supporting and organizing the partisan movement both with front-line command and control agencies and with the intelligence department of the General Staff. By the autumn of 1941, in the rear of the Germans, there was a real

threat of disruption of their main communications. The partisans of the western regions of the RSFSR, together with the operational groups of the NKVD and the Intelligence Department of the Red Army, held, for example, in the Smolensk region, the regional centers of Baturino, Vskhody, Glinki, Dorogobuzh, Ugra, Kholm, Zhirki, Ponizovye, Svoboda. There are five regional centers in the Oryol region. The Bryansk partisans successfully defeated the German garrisons. All this naturally created a nervous atmosphere in the German headquarters and could not but influence the development of events on the fronts. In this regard, noteworthy is the document intercepted by V. Zuenko's

group, which testifies to the assessment by the Germans

the scale of the war in their rear. Back in August, the German command issued an order that it considers even the local population of working age as potential prisoners of war. This order, to a large extent, it seems to me, opens up the question of the count of prisoners of war of the Red Army. The number of captured soldiers of the Red Army is certainly overestimated, because the Germans considered as prisoners of war not only military personnel, but all persons liable for military service who were in the territory they occupied. In the order of the Nazi command, it was written that "the attitude towards the local population should be like prisoners of war." Such actions, of course, predetermined the bitter attitude on the part of the German invaders towards the Soviet people and their corresponding response. I think that the figures regarding Soviet prisoners of war need to be carefully adjusted. Materials from the archives of the NKVD can help in

this

matter. Since this is an important issue, I emphasize that my opinion is based on the order of September 24, 1941, from the commander of the 40th German infantry division Rendulich, intercepted by the task force V. Zuenko, which says: "To put an end to all doubts, I order once again: all local residents of an age suitable for military service must be turned into prisoners without fail, suspicious elements should be destroyed. August and September 1941 was the

period when we managed to correctly formulate not only the tasks of reconnaissance and sabotage combat behind enemy lines, but also to determine the places of operations in connection with the plans of the Soviet High Command. These two aspects of the struggle behind enemy lines - the mass partisan movement and reconnaissance sabotage activities - were closely related to each other. Among the main tasks assigned to us were the collection and receipt of

continuous information about the deployment and movements of the Nazi troops, their strength, combat capability and vulnerable places, which made it possible to clearly plan the preparation and organization of hostilities along the line of our special forces - detachments of the troops of the Special Group for sabotage on enemy communications.

In connection with the development of a mass partisan movement, our special forces were tasked with assisting in the capture and holding of important administrative strategic points in the rear of the Nazi troops, which would create a nervous situation for them. It was supposed to deploy special forces in the locations of the German headquarters, in territories of great political importance to us.

Considering that the enemy had already used both special punitive detachments and auxiliary military units against partisans and the local population, the NKVD special forces had to be ready to fight to hold partisan bases and base areas, lure the enemy into ambushes, prepare areas and strongholds of the partisan in advance movement. Of great importance was the mining of enemy targets and

the development of tactics for direct combat contact with the enemy. It was necessary to develop tactical instructions on how to operate in small combat groups, retreat to pre-equipped and targeted positions. Our men had to know local conditions in order to be able to maneuver effectively on the ground. Particular attention in connection with the training of personnel for special forces was given to equipping its units with snipers and sappers. We faced enormous difficulties - lack of personnel and technical means. Unusual and unfamiliar for us was the blocking of transport routes by the Germans in the

occupied territory, the creation of roadblocks, the introduction of control over roads and, finally, complete air supremacy, which, as experts who had experience of the war in Spain emphasized, greatly complicates the deployment of the partisan movement in the rear the enemy, fetters the mobility of partisan formations, exposes their supply bases to attack. Despite these difficulties, the scope of sabotage in the rear communications of the enemy continuously increased. In the period from the beginning of the war to September 16, 1941, 447 railway bridges were destroyed in the rear of the Nazi troops,

including 117 in the rear of the Army Group "Center" and 141 bridges in the Army Group "South". Attacks on German communications inflicted by our sabotage

groups and partisans, knocked down the pace of the German offensive. The enemy was forced to allocate up to 300 thousand soldiers to protect important objects in the

rear. At the same time, the front of hostilities in the fall of 1941 was inexorably approaching Moscow. The use of special forces and operational groups of the NKVD to confront the enemy directly at the front, as well as in his near and far rear, has become the first task on our agenda. In the difficult combat conditions of the battle for Moscow, it was necessary to conduct a thorough check of the combat capability of the reconnaissance and sabotage units of the Soviet state security agencies.

Chapter 14

The Baku oil fields (which became an integral part of the Transcaucasian theater of operations after the entry of our troops into Iran) have always been at the center of the strategic developments of the Soviet military command and the object of activity of both the central apparatus of our intelligence and peripheral state security agencies. It is known that

even before the end of the Soviet-Finnish war, the British and French developed a plan for their aerial bombing. The relevant documents clearly spoke of the purpose of this operation - to deprive the USSR and Germany of sources of Caucasian oil. The leaders of the country knew about the planned attacks on the oil fields of Baku from intelligence reports - the military and the NKVD. However, unfortunately, our intelligence was unable to obtain accurate data on the timing of the bombing of Baku: both February and the beginning of March 1940 were mentioned. But February passed, March came - there were no blows. Rumors about impending raids and sabotage caused great tension at the top, as a result of which the grouping of our troops in Transcaucasia was

tripled. I would like to dwell in more detail on the work of Soviet intelligence in the Caucasian direction. The great attention that began to be given to him was connected, first of all, with the successful activities of our two major agents who were in the environment of the Caucasian emigration hostile to us: Omeri and the 59th, a prominent figure in the Georgian emigration Gigelius. Our residents in Paris in 1939-1941 and 1944-1946 (Vasilevsky and Guzovsky) worked directly with him.

On the eve of the war, they began to attach particular importance to Caucasian issues: our residencies in France and Turkey were strengthened. The Caucasian direction was so important that materials on the activities of the Georgian emigration were regularly reported personally to Stalin both before the start and throughout the war.

Work on the Caucasian line was carried out in Paris by Vardo Maximilashvili, who, until graduating from the intelligence school in 1940 (under the guidance of E. Zarubina), worked for some time as Beria's secretary. G. Gukasov also acted in the same direction, taking the surname Kobakhadze for a business trip to Paris (similar to Stalin's party pseudonym - Koba), although he was an Armenian. They were assisted by Dmitry Pozhidaev, our young employee. By the way, he made a number of mistakes in contacts with agent Norma (who later received the pseudonym Ada) - the first wife of the famous member of the Cambridge Five D. McLane - Katherine Garisson (Kitty Hariss). Pozhidaev, apparently, did not speak English very well, which probably caused a misunderstanding in relations with her. Resident Vasilevsky was forced to personally contact her. And when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked to second Pozhidaev to his full disposal, the intelligence leadership did not object.

The "development" of the members of the Georgian government in exile of the Mensheviks continued during the war. Connections and contacts with agents were extremely important in tracking down the Georgian Mensheviks involved in the anti-Soviet movement. After the end of the war, a confidant of Beria and Stalin, Pyotr Afanasyevich Sharia, a professor and academician who prepared proposals for the return of Georgian emigrants, went to Paris to negotiate with the Mensheviks. He was a philosopher, a great scientist, who even allowed himself to argue with Stalin. It happened that at the dacha they were "taken apart" during discussions on questions of philosophy; the professor used to be pressed on his leg under the table in order to calm and cool his passions.

Previously, Sharia was Beria's propaganda assistant all the time. When he was appointed head of the NKVD secretariat (when Beria moved to Moscow), things in the secretariat fell into complete disarray. Sharia had to be moved to scientific and methodological work: he headed a special bureau under the People's Commissar, associated with the processing of documentation, the analysis of proposals for the experience of intelligence and counterintelligence work, although, generally speaking, he did not understand this area very well. Then he gave lectures, and during the war years he turned out to be the deputy head of intelligence. In 1951, Sharia was arrested in the Mingrelian case because he

negotiations with the Georgian Mensheviks (mainly with a large group of Mingrelians in Paris). Knowing that one of the leaders of the Menshevik Georgians, Gegechkori, was a relative of Beria, they wanted to contact Beria through him. The necessary testimony from Sharia was

not knocked out. The Georgian Mensheviks in 1939-1940 tried to illegally send their emissaries to Georgia to contact Beria. We were informed of this by agents in advance. In this connection, V. Ilyin, head of the secret political department of counterintelligence, was sent from Moscow to Georgia, who in 1939 not only led the Caucasian direction, but was also responsible for the "development" of the Mensheviks. Naturally, it was he who was entrusted with the reception of an agent who arrived on our territory illegally. Beria then interrogated him in Moscow, since it was supposed to use this person in the future in an operational game with the enemy. Soon he was sentenced to twenty years in prison, and he fully served his term. In 1953, they unsuccessfully tried to use him in testimony against Beria as "an agent of imperialist circles and

Menshevism."

Our agent positions among the Caucasian emigration were exceptionally strong not only in France, but also in Turkey. Back in the early 1930s, P. Zubov and L. Vasilevsky successfully worked with the already mentioned Gigelia. It was even possible to prevent the assassination attempt on Stalin planned by the Georgian Mensheviks. Omeri was valued for being an active member of the Menshevik Party of Georgia since 1918. In 1922, he was arrested for anti-Soviet activities.

VIIIV and more than a year was held in custody. At the initiative of Beria, he was released and sent into exile. In September 1939, on behalf of the Menshevik Foreign Bureau and personally the leader of the Georgian Mensheviks N. Zhordania (member of the RSDLP 1907-1912, deputy of the 1st State Duma), Omeri negotiated with representatives of the French, British and Polish military command. He met with the famous B. Savinkov, as well as the head of Polish intelligence, Colonel Novachek. 59th - Gigelia, conducting political intelligence on our behalf against the

Mensheviks in Georgia, having the manifesto of N. Jordania, traveled to the Middle East, met in Beirut with the Commander-in-Chief of the French Forces, General Weygand. IN

Turkey communicated with representatives of the military command and the French military attache in Ankara. Through the 59th, we learned the details of the British and French intervention plan against the USSR in the event of a protracted war with Finland at the beginning of 1940 and about Turkey's wait-and-see position on this issue.

In 1939-1940, the leadership of Turkey swore friendship to Stalin, negotiated with him on the normalization of relations, and on the eve of the war secretly acted against us together with the French and Germans. It was the Turks who in December 1939 formed the so-called Istanbul Council of the Caucasus Confederation. It included Omeri and Alexander Gozani from the Georgian Mensheviks, Khasrombek Sultanov and Mustafa Vikilov from the Azerbaijani Musavatists, Mamed Giray, Dzhabagiyev and others from the highlanders of the North Caucasus and the Chechen diaspora. There was also a Paris headquarters of this movement, which coordinated the activities of all nationalist elements against Soviet power in Transcaucasia, which later formed the backbone of the Muslim battalion created by the Germans.

In 1940, the Council of the Confederation of the Caucasus collapsed, as its members went to different countries: Chkhenkeli and Yakubov, as far as I remember, remained in Paris, Mengerishvili went to London, others to

Romania and Turkey. Despite the military defeat of Poland, in 1940, Polish intelligence also tried to act against us in Transcaucasia. Counselor of the Polish Embassy in Turkey, Zalessky, told our agent Sultanov that a letter had been received from London from the Polish government with a request that the Istanbul branch take over the functions of the Council of the Confederation of the Caucasus as the coordinator

of the armed struggle against the USSR. Caucasian emigration during Stalin's lifetime always aspired to play an important political role. She tried to use her relatives in Soviet Georgia to reach people from the entourage of Stalin and Beria. So, they tried to pick up the keys to V. Kavtaradze, the future Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs during the war years, the USSR Ambassador to Romania. He was arrested in the 1930s "for participating in the Menshevik conspiracy", but then released by Stalin. His participation in the operational game was not excluded. All these people were at the center of political intrigues in the stru

which Stalin started against the Mengrelians in 1951. It is no coincidence that Gigelia was arrested that very year, although he returned from emigration to Georgia in 1946.

It is significant that at a meeting in the Kremlin, when in January 1953 the issue of reorganizing intelligence and creating the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR was considered, Stalin remembered Omer, who had been introduced into the Menshevik environment, and noted that correct work through emanation makes it possible to reveal the

enemy's foreign policy plans in time. The problem of the Baku oil fields worried the British ruling circles throughout the war. Worried from the point of view of the restoration of British influence in the Caucasus and in Iran in areas of large oil fields. It would seem that the plan of bombing Baku in 1940, connected with the beginning of the German offensive in the West and the occupation of France, should have become unnecessary in 1941 in connection with the German attack on the USSR. However, British intelligence still tried to implement the provisions of this plan, formally named as depriving the Germans of sources of Soviet oil. To achieve this goal, she sought to achieve her presence in the Caucasus from the very beginning of the Great Patriotic War.

Already in August 1941, an English military liaison mission headed by Colonel G. Wei arrived in Tbilisi. It consisted of five liaison officers and five technical officers. Among the officers, Captain and Squadron Leader Lawrence Lockhart were of Russian descent from families of immigrants from Russia. Their relatives participated in the First World War in the Caucasus. According to Lockhart, we had an orientation saying that he was an employee of the SOU - the Special Operations Directorate of British Intelligence, created to carry out active measures. But formally, Colonel Way was listed in the states of the British army in India. We also had some information about Lockhart - he went through our "accounts": he was a well-known researcher dealing with problems in Persia, and even during the First World War he collaborated with British intelligence, then he served in the intelligence of the British Air Force headquarters.

The mission arrived in Tbilisi via Mosul in Iraq. This aroused great concern in us - we connected the arrival of the English

intelligence officers there not only with the problem of interaction between special services on the eve of our army's entry into Iran. We were alarmed that the mission included oil specialists and experts on the Soviet Union - in fact, it was about preparing a special operation for the British to mine the oil fields in Baku. The main task of the British was to keep the Germans out of our oil. The interests of the Soviet Union in supplying the country and the army with oil products were of secondary importance for the British. British intelligence persistently sought to create a reliable base for sabotage operations in the Transcaucasus. Therefore, from July-August 1941, their intelligence officers significantly intensified their contacts with nationalist elements. They sought to get into the regions of Grozny, Maikop, where there was a dangerous operational situation due to the revival of banditry, intensively studied the Transcaucasian theater of military operations. Materials received from England about this mission pointed to its role in cooperation with us in carrying out a joint Soviet-British operation to occupy Iran and eradicate German influence there. However, the fact that the British began to work out with new energy the old plan to disable our oil fields, which seemed to have already been archived and gathering dust on the shelves since 1940, doomed their efforts to failure in advance. After all, a year before the start of the war, we were aware of the main directions of British efforts, and this facilitated the appropriate countermeasures in the line of Soviet intelligence and counterintelligence. We, who were engaged in the Transcaucasian direction, remembered how sharply

Stalin reacted in 1940 to the data of our intelligence about the possible bombing of the Baku industries, although our grouping in Transcaucasia was strengthened at the end of the Finnish war. Events have taken a new turn. After analyzing this information, the Center decided to significantly strengthen the apparatus of the NKGB of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, instructing it to "develop" the British mission, taking the necessary measures on the spot. The difficulty was that, on the one hand, this should be done by the NKGB apparatus of Georgia, and on the other, by the military counterintelligence of the Transcaucasian district. But they had little experience in such events. Then from the central apparatus of counterintelligence in Tbilisi

sent the head of the department for work against the British and Americans, Norman Mikhailovich Borodin. He was an interesting man who worked as an illegal immigrant in the United States, an American by birth, born abroad. He had the pseudonym "Granite". He was our major illegal intelligence agent (Akhmerov's assistant), about whom very little is written in foreign intelligence essays. Borodin upon arrival together with Akhmerov in 1939 from the USA (unlike Akhmerov, who remained in the reserve of the 1st Directorate, in connection with the upcoming major events, as well as a reassessment of the materials that we had on the British and American embassies) was it was decided to use him as an organizer of work against the British and American intelligence services in Moscow. He showed himself to be a very productive worker: he has a personal merit in the recruitment of a number of American, British journalists and

diplomats.

Through the 2nd department of the NKVD, S. Volokitin and G. Rogatnev participated in the activities of the British and Georgian nationalists in Transcaucasia. The latter conducted a successful operation to infiltrate the pro-fascist nationalist legion, which effectively operated deep in the German rear and in Italy

agent	"Shakhovsky"	V	Georgian	until 1945.
-------	--------------	---	----------	-------------

It must be explained that two lines can be distinguished in the work of the British and Americans in the USSR on the eve of the war. One is related to political intelligence. In England, this was done by the Foreign Office, in the Americans - by the State Department, as well as diplomats and journalists. We were well aware of this, because we eventually managed to pick up the keys to the cipher correspondence between the American and British embassies. We were aware of almost all actions against us. The military attache of England in the USSR was engaged in direct intelligence activities. Employees of his apparatus actively conducted visual reconnaissance of Soviet military facilities. However, both the British and the Americans had the same weakness - a love for Russian ballet, or rather, for the ballerinas of the Bolshoi Theater. A young unmarried employee of the American embassy L. Thompson, military attache D. Faymonville, naval attache D. Beryl and others became admirers of their talent. Later, after the war, L. Thompson, having arrived in the USSR as an ambassador, being

a married man, he regularly invited his friends ballerinas of the Bolshoi Theater to his embassy for lunch. I must say that the US and British ambassadors in Moscow before the war (Budit and Cripps) were also big fans of Russian ballet. Norman Borodin was sent to Tbilisi as the head

of the joint operational group in order to properly establish order in the service of the British mission, so that outside surveillance and set-ups of agents were not used there, and the main thing for us then was to reveal the practical secret activities of the British. Borodin solved this problem: the connections of the British were established. Mission member Lockhard, who was an expert on Iranian and Caucasian oil and could realistically assess our fuel capabilities, in our opinion, was withdrawn from the USSR. The British were not interested in aggravating relations.

During the war years in the Caucasus, not a single sabotage operation, conceived with the support of the British, and then the Germans, ended in success. Although the enemy persistently searched for our most vulnerable places.

The efforts of Soviet intelligence and counterintelligence in the Transcaucasus and Iran to a large extent ensured a steady supply of fuel to the Red Army units and the stable operation of the Baku oil fields. The Germans also considered the Caucasian direction

the most vulnerable in terms of sabotage work against us. The enemy relied on a wide network of agents from the local population living in the adjacent territory. Therefore, the Germans, when drawing up plans for sabotage work, always took into account the objective basis for conducting such operations. The Germans also had strong positions in Iran and Turkey. By the way, the connection of the Chechen gangs at that time was clearly traced with the Turkish special services. But Turkey, for a number of reasons, behaved cautiously - for it, the Chechen, Caucasian card was a bargaining chip. She was in good economic relations with the USSR and did not want to spoil them. And the Soviet-German non-aggression pact meant for the Turks that the Germans would not support them in disputes with the Soviet Union, since they were busy at war with England and France.

The prospects for the occupation of the Black Sea straits either by the British, or the French, or by us as a result of any agreements made Turkey's position especially vulnerable. And therefore, we could talk about sabotage operations against the Soviet Union not from Turkey, but from Iranian territory. And the Turks preferred during this period not to get involved in aggravating relations with us, although, of course, they fed the nationalist emigrant organizations, but cooperation with them was always carried out at the level of special services. In July-August 1941, the

German command, along the line of the Abwehr, began practical preparations for an attack on the Baku oil fields. The enemy, however, pursued another goal - to provoke unrest among the Muslim population in the Caucasus. In this matter, the Germans could not but rely on Muslim nationalist elements, on the figures of the Georgian and Armenian emigration who collaborated with them.

Concerned about the serious threat of disruption to the stable operation of the Baku oil fields, and also striving to improve our strategic position in the Transcaucasus in connection with the breakthrough of our Southern Front by the Germans, the Soviet leadership, as you know, agreed with England on the occupation of Iran by the Red Army and British forces.

Soviet intelligence played a significant role in the implementation of this operation. Through our residency, reliable data were received from Turkey about the neutrality of the Turkish forces and about Turkey's non-interference in Anglo-Soviet actions. The Turkish and Iranian areas of activity of our intelligence were strengthened by experienced leading personnel. People such as L. Eitingon, the head of the German intelligence department P. Zhuravlev, well-known workers L. Vasilevsky, I. Agayants and others were sent to work in Turkey and Iran. It has already been written and said about them. But there are others to be mentioned. Young intelligence officers who came to us in 1939 from Leningrad University were also sent to Iran - S. Tikhvinsky (a future academician, a prominent historian) and M. Ushomirsky. Ushomirsky played an important role in the joint operations of the Soviet and British secret services in Iran and, in particular, in the quick and bloodless capture of the controlled German intelligence

radio stations of the Iranian army in Mashhad. Finally, in the late autumn of 1941, we began an important operation in Iran to establish contacts with the Kurdish tribes. This issue was of the utmost importance. Both the British and the Germans tried to use the Kurds against us as saboteurs. We were in dire need of specialists in Arab affairs. In this regard, an experienced employee N. Belkin, called up from the reserve, was sent to the apparatus of the service under my direct subordination. He had extensive experience in undercover work in the Middle East, Germany and Spain. In 1937-1938 he was an assistant to our resident in Spain, who subsequently disappeared in the West, Orlov-Nikolsky. In 1938, due to suspicions of ties with Nikolsky, he was fired from intelligence, but as a valuable experienced worker with a possible use through an unspoken staff, he was sent as head of the information bureau to the All-Union Radio Committee. The war demanded him, and on the personal order of Beria, he was sent to Transcaucasia and Iran in November 1941 to carefully study the Kurdish question and carry out activities along this line. Timely operational preparations and developments of our intelligence and

counterintelligence in the Transcaucasus, Iran and Turkey in the autumn and December 1941 allowed us not only to neutralize the efforts of the British agents to create a sabotage apparatus against the Soviet Union, but also to successfully repel the actions of the Nazi special services in the critical year 1942 when the Wehrmacht managed to break into the Caucasus. Then the Baku oilfields were under the gun of the enemy and the objects of real bombardment by German aircraft.

Chapter 15

PROBLEM

Today there is a lot of gossip about the role of intelligence and security agencies in the creation of the Soviet atomic bomb. One of the creators of our scientific and technical intelligence, L. Kvasnikov, in one of his interviews, directly noted that the "initiative materials" of the NKVD in 1942 led to the start of extensive work by domestic scientists to create nuclear weapons. How was it in reality?

In the Soviet Union as a whole, at the same level, and sometimes ahead of the work of foreign physicists in the 1930s-1940s, a number of important studies on the uranium problem were successfully carried out. It is known that the Academy of Sciences had a special commission on this issue. Although at the beginning of 1941, this commission had little hope of obtaining an isolated isotope of uranium-235 or a mixture enriched with it in significant quantities. It should also be noted that as early as the end of 1940, a scientific conference was held in Moscow, in which prominent physicists of the country took part, who noted the great military significance of solving the uranium problem.

It should be emphasized that the myth about the NKVD intelligence's own initiative in obtaining from the USA, England, Germany, proactive information on the development of military-technical research on the uranium-235 problem, although it has a steady circulation, is not supported by documents. The fact is that the note of the uranium commission to the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR on the significance of the atomic problem and the operational letter from the leadership of the Soviet intelligence to the resident of the NKVD in New York G. Ovakimyan about studying the problem of uranium coincide in time due to publications in the American and Chinese press. Both documents, as I recall, appeared at the very beginning of 1941.

Such a coincidence is not accidental. For orientations about the need to explore certain technical secrets abroad through the security agencies and the Intelligence Department of the Red Army in the 40s were always issued after the leadership of either the Academy of Sciences, or a number of industrial departments informed the heads of the NKVD, the diplomatic, foreign trade service, the people's commissariat defense of interest in obtaining additional classified information on any scientific and technical problem through special channels of Soviet intelligence.

Some of our intelligence historians, in particular O. Tsarev and V. Chikov, write that the archives of intelligence and the NKVD lack primary materials on the initial stage of intelligence work on the atomic bomb. Perhaps they are right, since some of the materials were transferred in 1946 to the disposal of the Government's Special Committee on the Atomic Problem, but, unfortunately, important primary materials are sometimes distorted under this pretext. Meanwhile, in January 1941, the head of Soviet intelligence, P. Fitin, sent a special letter prepared by L. Kvasnikov to G. Ovakimyan, not to the effect that publications on the uranium problem had ceased in scientific publications, but, on the contrary, that important information about research on the problem of uranium, conducted at the Physics Department of Columbia University in New York. The letter indicated the interest of Soviet physicists in solving this "obviously real problem of obtaining a new substance with enormous energy."

G. Hovakimyan (Gennady) involved in the study of this issue a talented young employee of the residency S. Semenov (Twain). He managed to get important information from Columbia University. In the spring of 1941, "Gennady" reported to the Center that significant attention was being paid to work on uranium and that the US scientific community, citing information from German physicists who had escaped fascism in America, England and Sweden, feared that Hitler was making serious efforts to create a "uranium bomb". However, work on atomic weapons was just

beginning. Moreover, they did not even begin as experimental studies, but as a scientific generalization of theoretical views on this problem. More

a year and a half remained before the famous experiment of E. Fermi, who created and launched the world's first nuclear reactor. After the attack

of fascist Germany on the Soviet Union, the leaders of the Academy of Sciences repeatedly drew the attention of the Soviet leadership to the possible creation by the enemy of a new generation of weapons of mass destruction based on the principles of using intra-atomic energy.

Academicians P. Kapitsa and A. Ioffe were the most active at that time. It was Kapitsa who, at an anti-fascist rally of scientists in the fall of 1941, was the first to brilliantly predict that in the unfolding world war an atomic bomb, even a small one, if feasible, could easily destroy a capital city with several million people.

Therefore, it was precisely to the attention of P. Kapitsa and A. Ioffe that at the beginning of 1942, in a strictly confidential manner, the leadership of the NKVD brought in the most general form the materials received from England on work on the use of atomic

energy abroad. It should be noted that the leadership of the NKVD intelligence in the fall of 1941 was not aware of the fact that, through the line of military intelligence, important materials were also received from the German physicist, emigrating to England, through special agent S. Kuchinskaya, about the start of work there on the creation of an atomic bombs. The leadership of military intelligence was specially informed about these materials by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR only in the spring of 1942.

In an effort to exaggerate their role in initiating scientific research on atomic weapons within the country and in conducting intelligence work on the atomic problem, a number of veterans and historians of intelligence, for the sake of the situation, spread the myth that intelligence work on the atomic problem was launched by ordinary young employees and the head of the department L. Kvasnikov contrary to the opposition of the then People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, who led all intelligence work in the country, L. Beria.

A. Yatskov wrote that Beria had told L. Kvasnikov that "the Germans are near Moscow and don't slip me misinformation." I doubt the reality of this conversation, because in October 1941, when materials arrived from London, Beria was in Moscow, and the foreign intelligence apparatus was mainly, and in particular the department

scientific and technical intelligence, were evacuated to Kuibyshev. It is very doubtful that Kvasnikov, who at that time was in Kuibyshev, could come with a report to Beria. In addition,

despite the extremely difficult military situation, received on October 4, 1941, the message of the NKVD resident in England about the use of atomic energy for military purposes was exclusively promptly considered and evaluated by employees of the 4th Special Department of Operational Equipment of the NKVD. His boss, V. Kravchenko, reported to Beria on October 10, 1941, that is, less than a week later, that: "1. The

materials are of undoubted interest as evidence of the great work carried out in England in the field of the use of uranium atomic energy for military purposes.

2. The presence of only available materials does not allow us to conclude how practical and feasible the various ways of using atomic energy, which are reported in the materials. It is significant that it was the department of

operational equipment of the NKVD, recognizing the exceptional importance of solving the "uranium problem", on October 10, 1941, that formulated the first proposals on the need to inform the country's leadership about the prospects for the use of atomic energy for military purposes. It was then, along with the proposal to instruct the foreign intelligence agency of the NKVD to collect specific verified materials on the construction of a pilot plant for the production of uranium bombs, for the first time a proposal was made to "create a special commission under the State Defense Committee of the USSR from among prominent scientists working in the field of fission of the atomic nucleus, in order to develop proposals on carrying out work in the USSR on the use of atomic energy for military purposes. It was also suggested that academicians Kapitsa and Skobeltsyn be acquainted with these materials.

Kapitsa, familiarized with these data, suggested contacting a number of prominent British scientists who had begun to deal with this problem. One of these specialists, a scientist who worked with Niels Bohr in Copenhagen in the 30s, then an employee of the British scientific and technical intelligence W. Mann, in conversations with our

worker in London in the autumn of 1941 confirmed the start of work on the "uranium problem" in England.

From V. Mann (Malon), who after the war became the representative of British scientific and technical intelligence in the United States, subsequently received valuable data on plans for an atomic war against the USSR in

early 1950. Interestingly, Mann was in hostile relations with the chief representative of British intelligence in Washington, C. Philby. Another source of primary information about the beginning of work on the atomic bomb in England was R. Berman, a native of Riga, who collaborated with the Imperial Chemical Industries

concern. Only a narrow circle of specialists gives due credit to the initial great initiating role of Kapitsa in establishing the first contacts with foreign scientists who began to work on the "uranium problem". After all, the British, not confident in their capabilities, sought to contact Kapitsa through diplomatic and intelligence channels in late 1941 and early 1942 in order to possibly involve our most authoritative scientists in joint work on the atomic bomb, since it was erroneously believed that the Germans were ahead of the anti-Hitler coalition in work on creating this new type of weapon. Based on the confirmation of the British interest in work on atomic

weapons according to military intelligence and the NKVD, we additionally oriented our residencies in the USA and England at the beginning of 1942 on the problem of uranium-235 and the tasks of scientific and technical intelligence in this area. It will be fair to note that in At that time, the main

tasks of scientific and technical intelligence were considered to be the acquisition of documentary data on work in the areas of radar, military chemistry, bacteriological weapons, and aircraft construction. By the way, in the USA and England, although work on the "uranium problem" was classified, they also believed that the creation of an atomic bomb was not a matter of the near future. Therefore, for the time being, scientists

of foreign origin and political emigrants - refugees from Germany - were admitted to purely theoretical work in this area.

The counterintelligence of the USA and England in 1941-1942 did not prevent the use of these people "in purely theoretical research", knowing about their connections with the Comintern. At the same time, the admission of such people to work that had practical immediate significance for the improvement of military equipment was blocked. The counterintelligence regime in the United States and England was much tougher in aviation, artillery factories and in laboratories for the production of radar instruments. This circumstance played an extremely important role in the fact that already at the initial stage of research on the atomic bomb in the scientific centers of the USA and England there were people who sympathized with us, close to the leadership of the Communist Parties of these countries.

For example, Robert Oppenheimer since 1938 maintained close relations with the illegal resident of the Comintern in California - I. Volkov (Uncle). He also regularly paid, until the beginning of 1942, membership dues to the US Communist Party, being in its tacit state.

In California, from the mid-1930s, by inertia, the combined residency of military intelligence and the NKVD continued to operate, initially relying on the cadres of the Comintern. An illegal resident of military intelligence in the United States, Thomas Adis (Akhil) and Grigory Kheifets (Kharon) maintained active contact with them through the NKVD. Oppenheimer was close to them through his friends, in particular the great chemist Martin Kaman, and went by the pseudonym "Chester" in correspondence, since he then lived in a suburb of San Francisco on a street called Chester Road.

In December 1941, Kheifets, as a temporary representative of the executive committee of the Comintern, announced the start of work on the atomic bomb, and also that Professor Oppenheimer and other activists of the secret apparatus of the Communist Party could not continue active party work, in connection with the involvement in scientific research of a special nature, and that in 1942 they will be bound by obligations not to disclose the results of these works. Therefore, the Center decided to assign an illegal special agent, Katherine Harrison (Harrison), to contact Oppenheimer - Ada in correspondence, who had proven herself well in Western Europe in her work with the Zarubins. It was they who headed the apparatus of Soviet intelligence in

United States in December 1941. An important circumstance was the fact that "Ada" was well known to members of the illegal apparatus and the leadership of the US

Communist Party. In addition to confirming data from Columbia University about the beginning of work on the atomic bomb and about the successes of German physicists, we also had serious materials about the attention of the American government to this issue. This was reported through illegal channels of the special circle of the US Communist Party, N. Silvermaster, by another prominent American physicist E. Condon, who later became the head of the US Bureau of Standards. Our group leader Zvuk-Ya Golos repeatedly met with him. I must say that this person was generally aware of the scale of all work on the atomic bomb. He held a fairly prominent position in American society. An interesting

story happened to him. American counterintelligence, apparently, was actively developing it. E. Condon, E. Fermi and other prominent American scientists received invitations to the 225th anniversary of the USSR Academy of Sciences in the summer of 1945 (before the explosion of atomic bombs over Japan). We actively prepared to receive them in our line. A joint action plan for intelligence and counterintelligence was drawn up. From foreign intelligence, S. Semenov was responsible for him, from the counterintelligence department - Norman Borodin.

But here's what's interesting, Fermi was not allowed into the USSR, while Condon was removed from the plane by the American special services at the last moment, already taxiing to the runway. Despite his protests, the authorities canceled his flight to the Soviet Union as part of an official delegation. I think that since (it was July 1945) the revelations of our agents were already beginning, the American counterintelligence was following in their footsteps. Of course, in addition to everything, they could not ignore the situation that one of the leading officials of the government apparatus, and even due to circumstances working at the Los Alamos atomic center, at the Berkeley nuclear laboratory in California, where atomic weapons were developed, the head of the US Bureau of Standards, who visited the circle of the Communist Party, the keeper of important secrets, could fly to the Soviet Union.

The episode with Condon had an interesting continuation. In December 1945, in Moscow for a meeting of foreign ministers

a representative American delegation arrived, which included one of the leaders of the American atomic project, D. Conant. The American side turned

to us with a request to organize a meeting and negotiations with Academician P. Kapitsa, whom the British and American secret services considered the scientific director of Soviet work on atomic weapons and a consultant to Soviet intelligence.

Secretary of State O. Byrnes, Ambassador A. Harriman and D. Conant offered the Soviet side - Stalin and Molotov - cooperation in the field of atomic energy, familiarizing us with the secrets of the atomic bomb in exchange for the USSR refusing to produce it. These conditions were put forward by the Americans in the event that they would conduct scientific and technical negotiations with the participation of P. Kapitsa and Academician A.

Ioffe. I did not participate in the negotiations, although I was "listed" as

Molotov's assistant. Contacts between Kapitsa and Ioffe with the Americans were not allowed, but on December 22, at a dinner in honor of the American delegation in the Kremlin, a significant conversation took place, which I, as one of the eyewitnesses who participated in the design of his recording, knew in detail. Molotov, commenting on the remarks of Byrnes and Conant about a possible schedule for the transfer of data on the American atomic bomb to the USSR, joked: "Would you like to extract for us the drawings of the atomic bomb brought

to Moscow from your vest pocket for review." Stalin abruptly cut Molotov off. I was even struck by his rudeness towards his colleague in the presence of the Americans. I forever remembered his words: "Atomic energy and the bomb are the property of all mankind, this is not a subject for jokes. I raise a toast to the great American physicists who made this

outstanding discovery." I want to respond to those who continue to claim, allegedly from my words, that Oppenheimer and other scientists were recruited "agents of Soviet intelligence." Nothing like this! They were our "sources", connected with trusted agents, trusted persons and operational workers.

The reception by Stalin and Molotov of the American delegation finally convinced us that after our contacts in November 1945 with N. Bohr, the Americans want to use the authority of A. Einstein, R. Oppenheimer to establish contacts with our physicists in order to determine our level of work on the atomic bomb. Therefore, together with B. Vannikov, the head of the Special Directorate of the USSR government on the atomic bomb, I signed at the same time a conclusion on the inexpediency of the participation of Soviet specialists in a joint book with the Americans on the problem

of uranium. It was in the terrible year of 1941 that our talented operatives G. Ovakimyan, A. Gorsky, S. Semenov, G. Kheifets laid the foundations for working with progressive circles of the scientific intelligentsia in the West - this was not at all easy to do. You had to have a high culture of behavior, great operational experience, be fluent in several foreign languages, take care of your connections, and not expose friends who trusted you with important information under attack. These people, like a magnet, attracted outstanding representatives of the scientific thought of the Western countries. For example, one of the scientists close to Oppenheimer, Kaman, was a prominent specialist in the field of chemistry, a co-author of the discovery of carbon-14, and developed a pioneering method for obtaining lightweight iron in a cyclotron.

Kaman, not as an agent, but as a member of the American-Soviet Scientific Society, the Joint Committee for Relief of Anti-Fascist Refugees, the American League for the Fight against Fascism, the Society for Aiding Russia in the War, informed Heifets about the participation of Niels Bohr in the atomic project and the commissioning of the first nuclear reactors. American counterintelligence, following the communists, recorded his meetings with Heifetz. However, here, first of all, it should be said that it was Grigory Kheifets, one of the closest friends of the famous writer Leon Feuchtwanger, who was a man of such a scale and erudition who could freely talk with prominent scientists. Before working in the line of scientific and technical intelligence, in 1929-1930 he worked as an executive editor of the magazine "Inventor". Interestingly, at the very beginning of his career after participating in the civil war, G. Kheifets in 1921-1922 was the secretary of Lenin's wife N. Krupskaya.

Today, unfortunately, a number of foreign intelligence historians disdain the memory of this man. They operate with rigged, falsified materials about his allegedly ineffective work abroad. This statement is dragged into a closed textbook on the history of foreign intelligence, which I was introduced to in 1991 and which O Vasiliev, a defector from the SVR, smuggled to the United States in 1994. My objections to the assessment of Heifetz's work have been ignored to this day. Heifetz is opposed, in my opinion, because of anti-Semitic sentiments and because he became a victim of political repression and purges. People in the apparatus were always unfriendly towards him, who were inferior to him both in terms of knowledge of the language, general erudition, who themselves were not directly involved in the recruitment of agents and the establishment of trusting ties. It was not by chance that I gave the example of Kaman.

Kheifetz kept this man: American counterintelligence could not sue him. Kaman continued to work in science, although he was prevented from traveling abroad, but in 1994 he was awarded the most prestigious Enrico Fermi Science Prize in the United States. KGB documents submitted to the Central

Committee of the CPSU on the case of the rehabilitation of G. Kheifetz, dismissed from foreign intelligence in 1938, reinstated in the NKVD in 1941 and convicted in 1952 in the case of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee and about the "Zionist conspiracy in the MGB" G. Kheifetz, speak of large the merits of this man and the flagrant injustice towards him. For successful and productive work abroad in 1944-1945, G. Kheifetz was awarded, on the recommendation of foreign intelligence, the military order of the Red Star and the medal "For Military Merit". Military orders were rarely given to intelligence workers in the USA and England during the war years. On

December 1, 1944, the head of foreign intelligence, P. Fitin, approved the following certification of G. Heifetz: "He has extensive experience in intelligence work, especially in illegal conditions. It has a fairly high general cultural level. He successfully worked in the circles of scientific, technical and creative intelligentsia abroad. He is working on improving his Chekist qualifications. In everyday life, he is modest, knows English and German, and is less fluent in French and Italian.

In 1945, Lieutenant Colonel of State Security G. Kheifets became deputy head of the foreign intelligence department. Since May 1946, he was appointed head of the American department of department "C" of the USSR Ministry of State Security for working with materials on the atomic

bomb. On March 6, 1947, during the re-certification and purge of the central apparatus of the state security organs, the personnel department of the MGB gave the following conclusion to G. Kheifets to the party bodies: Lieutenant Colonel Kheifets G. M. to leave at work in the MGB. However, on April 15, 1947, when a new foreign intelligence body, the Committee of Information, began to form, Minister of State Security V. Abakumov imposed on this document an exhaustive and concise resolution: "Dismiss."

Together with other intelligence veterans, G. Kheifets was dismissed from the state security personnel with transfer to the general military registration. In the same year, on July 17, he was approved by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks as Deputy Executive Secretary and a member of the Presidium of

the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee. Despite being rehabilitated in 1954, Kheifets did not receive a KGB seniority pension. Only on the proposal of the Central Committee of the CPSU, he was granted a personal pension as a member of the party since 1919 and a veteran of the intelligence of the Comintern in Germany, Latvia, Turkey, China since 1922. Kheifets went to work in

the OGPU foreign intelligence service in 1931. Thus, it should be recognized that the decisive contribution to the acquisition of the necessary agent and trusting connections for the deployment of intelligence work on the atomic bomb was made by career intelligence officers and special agents of the NKVD and military intelligence of the older generation. It was from them that the most valuable "sources" on the "uranium problem" in the United States and England were contacted by those who headed the scientific and technical intelligence of

Of course, not everything went smoothly at this difficult stage of work. The fact is that the intelligence of the NKVD, military intelligence and the Comintern interacted inconsistently with the illegal apparatus of the American Communist Party. And this inconsistency led to the fact that, say, we in the NKVD and in the Intelligence Department of the Red Army

acted sometimes at the same time and in parallel. And often from the same source.

Suffice it to say that Louise Branston, an employee of the residency of Grigory Kheifets, with whom he maintained personal relations, passed on information to him, and then in 1944, on her own initiative, switched through the old channels of the Comintern, already dissolved by that time, to contacts with military intelligence - Adams (Achilles). In particular, she gave him information about nuclear research from laboratories in Berkeley (California). This, of course, created difficult problems.

Later, in relations with the Comintern, it became necessary to put the entire intelligence apparatus in order. It must be admitted that serious mistakes were made in this case. The leadership of the NKVD raised the question before the Central Committee of the party, before Stalin and Dimitrov, so that the activists of the American Communist Party moved away from active work and direct ties with scientists working on the atomic project. I even had to stop using as a source of information the nephew of the General Secretary of the US Communist Party, Browder, whom Oppenheimer took at the request of the Communist Party to work in Los Alamos. There were big problems with this. And the People's Commissar of State Security V. Merkulov, as far as I remember, wrote an explanatory note to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks about this.

Chapter 16.

BATTLE FOR MOSCOW

Special Forces take the defensive

Intelligence warned of a possible imminent German offensive against Moscow already in the 20th of September 1941 (immediately after the capture of Kyiv by the Germans). Ten days remained before the start of the German "decisive throw". The issues of the defense of the capital were under the special control of the leadership of the Soviet state security agencies. At the same time, at the very beginning of the war, we overestimated the threat of the enemy dropping airborne units to carry out sabotage and disrupt the situation in the city.

I must say that already on June 24, 1941, the NKGB of the USSR considered the issues of combating possible enemy paratroopers. In particular, it was about the use of operational troops of the NKVD for this.

On August 2, 1941, through the NKVD, an order was given to the internal troops to create defense sectors near Moscow. It stated that in order to combat enemy airborne assaults in Moscow and the Moscow Region, it was necessary to create two combat sectors - Western and Eastern. The border of the first is the Leningradskoye Highway, along Khoroshevo-Mnevniki, the Moscow River to Zvenigorod, Ostashevo, Novoaleksandrovka. (The main directions were covered by the NKVD troops to Solnechnogorsk and Novopetrovskoye). The border of the second section is the left sector of Cheryomushki, the highway to Kaluga, Serpukhov station and a stronghold, created 23 kilometers south of Maloyaroslavets.

On August 6, 1941, another order of the NKVD followed to the troops of the Western and Eastern combat sectors on measures to further ensure defense on the distant approaches to Moscow. Advance detachments were sent to Lopasnya, Kadyinka, Kubinka. The troops of the NKVD and the operational groups of local authorities were actively studying the terrain of future hostilities.

On August 7, the acting chief of the operational troops of the NKVD of the USSR, Major General, and later Colonel General A. Apollonov, signed a special order on the use of units of internal troops to combat enemy landings. By order of the commander of the Moscow

Military District, Moscow and the regions of the region (even before the start of the German offensive) within a radius of 150 kilometers around the capital were divided into sectors. The heads of the sectors for the liquidation of the landings were to use the military units of the Red Army and the internal troops of the NKVD specially allocated for this. It was necessary to ensure their correct interaction: the commanders of the NKVD units located in the 150-kilometer zone, in accordance with the specified order, give an order to establish communication with the heads of sectors, the leadership of local security agencies. These measures have fully justified themselves, playing an important role in

critical days of October 1941.

The current situation near Moscow in October-November 1941 is quite well described in numerous memoirs. I would like to add a few words about the decision of principle adopted by the High Command: by order of the Headquarters, the special forces of the NKVD of the USSR - the Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade for Special Purposes (OMSBON) - were transferred to the active army. This most important decision predetermined the correct use of forces and means of special forces at critical moments in the battle near Moscow.

In October 1941, the OMSBON included more than 5 thousand people. The brigade consisted of two motorized rifle regiments of four and three battalions, a sapper and demolition company, special forces groups, parachute service, a school
junior officers and specialists.

On the initiative of Major G. Shperov, the sapper and demolition company was urgently deployed into a combined detachment of special forces engineering troops in the amount of 770 people, to which combat company groups from the first and second motorized rifle regiments of the brigade were attached. This detachment joined the group of engineering troops of the front (commanded by Major General A. Galitsky) and was actively used to counter the breakthrough of German tank units to

Moscow. He acted on the main, considered by the command of the Western Front and the General Staff, tank-hazardous areas.

OMSBON units mined highway dirt roads in the areas of Mozhaisk, Volokolamsk, Kashira, on the Leningradskoye highway in the Khimki region and the Moscow-Volga canal, along the Setun River and near Peredelkino, west of Chertanovo, on Kievskoye, Pyatnitskoye, Rogachevskoye and Dmitrovskoye highways.

In November 1941, we additionally allocated 300 more demolition men to the Headquarters. From October 23 to December 2, 1941, the detachments of the brigade installed more than 11 thousand anti-tank, 7 thousand anti-personnel mines, more than 160 powerful land mines, prepared 15 bridges and 2 pipelines for explosions. The OMSBON detachment destroyed 30 German tanks, 20 armored vehicles, 68 trucks, inflicted heavy losses on the enemy in manpower. The special forces acted

selflessly. When the enemy broke through to Yakhroma and began to transport tanks to the eastern coast, and the reconnaissance and sabotage units of the Abwehr (dressed in Red Army uniforms, who knew Russian well) captured the bridges, the situation was corrected only with the help of special forces soldiers who were thrown into battle near Dmitrov with the support armored train number 73 of the NKVD troops. The special forces recaptured the bridges from the enemy, blew them up and thereby blocked the movement of the German tank columns.

During this difficult time (in addition to air reconnaissance data), the Headquarters received the most verified information about the real state of affairs on the front near Moscow through the NKVD. Now, reading the orders of that time, one can appreciate the significance of the feat accomplished by the Chekist soldiers of the Dzerzhinsky Special Purpose Division and OMSBON in the battle near Moscow.

Here, for example, are the lines from the combat order of October 15, 1941. "The enemy on the outskirts of Moscow occupied the cities of Kalinin, Mozhaisk, Maloyaroslavets, units of the Red Army are operating ahead. The task of the operational troops of the NKVD is to prevent the enemy from breaking

through to Moscow. Moscow was divided into defense sectors. What areas were ordered to protect the troops of the NKVD?

These are the north and northwest directions. The border on the right is the Yaroslavl Highway, on the left is the Mozhayskoye Highway. Parts of the NKVD troops covered the Leningrad highway, military training units - the area of the Rzhevsky station. The Mytishchi direction was covered by the Losinoostrovskaya and Izhorskaya stations. Reconnaissance was supposed to be carried out in the areas of Mytishchi-Pushkino. Parts of the Dzerzhinsky division took up a

position near the Dynamo stadium: they were faced with the task of covering the direction of the Leningrad highway. On the Pervomaiskaya platform, anti-tank defense was set up, its second line was in the area of the Spasskaya School. It was necessary to be in constant readiness to speak to the outskirts of the city. Exploration was planned to be carried out in the direction of Rzhevka.

Other parts of the Dzerzhinsky division concentrated in the area of the Vagankovsky cemetery. They covered the direction of Tushino-Serebryany Bor. Anti-tank defense was equipped at the turn of Rublevo. In the

very center of Moscow - in the area of Mayakovsky and Pushkin Squares, by 8 o'clock in the morning on October 16, 1941, the reserve of the NKVD troops was located - a separate

special-purpose brigade. And here is another order, which sounded even more menacing then. It was given on October 16, 1941 at 16.55. The divisions of the Dzerzhinsky division and OMSBON were instructed to prevent the enemy's motorized parts from breaking into Moscow. The division and the brigade blocked their path to the city in the direction of Vosstaniya-Kunts

It was ordered to organize continuous surveillance, move artillery batteries to the area of Smolenskaya Square and deploy them on Mozhaish Highway, Berezhkovskaya Embankment, Novodevichy Cemetery, Usacheva Street. The reserve was stationed in

Kiselny lane, house 11 (in the premises of the Higher School of the NKVD). The special forces brigade, remaining in the reserve of the commander of the second motorized rifle division of the NKVD troops, was supposed to prepare the area of Sverdlov Square, Red Square, Mayakovsky and Pushkin Squares for defense. The goal was not to let the enemy through the Garden Ring and at the same time be ready for action in the direction - Rzhevsky Station,

Leningradskoe highway, Volokolamskoe highway. The special forces also had to maintain public order in the surrounding streets.

It was on these days that the OMSBON detachments, on the orders of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, mine-explosive barriers on the northern approaches to Moscow, on the lines where the 10th, 16th and 30th armies were defending. In November-December 1941, a combined OMSBON detachment of 230 people in combat conditions carried out mine-blasting work from Solnechnogorsk to Khimki. At a critical moment

in the battle for Moscow, I assessed the correctness of the decision taken by the leadership of the NKVD to refrain in September 1941 from the mass sending of reconnaissance and sabotage groups of our special forces behind enemy lines in the western direction.

In September, I several times tried to get permission from the NKVD leadership to ensure that the raids of our special groups behind enemy lines were of a permanent nature. However, mass special forces raids were prohibited. Apart from the groups of Medvedev and Flegontov, I did not receive any sanctions from the leadership for the regular "ejection" of other operational groups. Hesitation regarding their use, apparently, was due to the fact that Beria and Merkulov felt the approach of a thunderstorm situation and therefore they preferred to have all the special forces at their disposal in case of an emergency aggravation of the situation on the Western Front. Beria

and Merkulov, obviously, also had information through military intelligence about the impending German attack on Moscow. In this regard, it is necessary to dwell in more detail on the issues of the work of our and German intelligence services.

The Germans did not have reliable information about the forces, means and, most importantly, the reserves of the Red Army. The directive of the High Command of the Wehrmacht No. 35 of September 6, 1941 set the goal of a decisive operation against the "Timoshenko Army Group". But Timoshenko, as you know, was not in command of the Western Front at this time. From this it is not difficult to conclude that the enemy did not know the Soviet command that

opposed him. We were better informed about the plans of the enemy. The General Staff and the NKVD managed to systematize the information received about the situation in the front line and about the preparation

German troops to attack. This information of our agents, in combination with intelligence from aerial reconnaissance, was reported to Headquarters in a timely manner. On September 27, 1941, the Headquarters ordered the troops to switch to a tough and stubborn defense and warned

of the offensive being prepared by the Germans. By the end of September, we revealed the intentions of the enemy. Despite the fact that the directive of the Headquarters ordered the commander of the Western Front, Colonel-General I. Konev, to pay special attention to covering the direction to Vyazma, the commander of the Reserve Front, S. Budyonny, to cover the Roslavl direction, the commander of the Bryansk Front, A. Eremenko, indicated the danger of an enemy attack on the Bryansk-Orlovsky direction, proper measures to coordinate the actions of the fronts were not taken. The expected enemy strike was not

repelled. It is known that the Germans concentrated a powerful strike force against us, which numbered about 1 million people - 77 divisions, up to 2 thousand tanks. From under Leningrad, Hitler actually transferred an additional tank army. But this superiority of the enemy was not overwhelming. We also had considerable forces - 800 thousand people, over 6800 guns and mortars, 780 tanks, up to 550 aircraft. From my point of view, they were enough to actively defend themselves, to prevent a catastrophic breakthrough of the front. However, we were unable to repel the enemy offensive without having a coordinated action plan for the fronts to counter the German offensive. At the same time, the fighters of the Western and Bryansk fronts accomplished a feat. Encircled, with their stubborn defense, they fettered 28 German divisions, rushing to Moscow. The enemy was forced to throw up to a third of his forces, including the main infantry formations, into the fight against the surrounded units of the Red Army.

This did not fit into any plans of the German command, which did not assume the presence of serious problems associated with the destruction of the encircled groups of the Red Army. The Germans expected that mass surrender would immediately begin. But people fought heroically and died, pulling back the colossal forces of the enemy. Thus, time was won. German tanks unaccompanied by infantry involved in battles with encircled units

Red Army, suspended their throw to Moscow. We must bow our heads before the memory of those who died in this heroic and tragic battle. I am proud of my worthy

contribution to the defense of the capital of OMSBON and our raid partisan sabotage formations. They played an important role in disrupting the Wehrmacht's Typhoon operation to encircle, capture and flood Moscow. I read about the recognition of the role of KGB sabotage operations in the diary entries of Field Marshal F. von Bock, commander of Army Group Center, who was rushing towards Moscow: "Using the victory near Vyazma is no longer possible, there is an underestimation of the enemy's resistance strength, its human and material reserves ... Russians managed to so increase our transport difficulties by destroying almost all buildings on the main railway lines and highways that the front was deprived of the most necessary for life and struggle ... in a stunningly short time, the Russians again put the defeated divisions on their feet, sent new forces to the front from Siberia, Iran and Caucasus ... the losses of officers and non-commissioned officers are frighteningly high ... the desire to defeat the Russians in a short assault was a delusion.

German bombs fall on decoys

I would like to say about one more aspect in the battle near Moscow. The capital was defended by a 90,000-strong labor army of Muscovites. In the fall of 1941, militiamen and civilians equipped more than 5,500 firing structures, built anti-tank ditches and scarps over 1,350 kilometers. 80 million cubic meters of soil were selected, 25 thousand tons of cement, 52 thousand tons of crushed stone and gravel were laid, about 60 thousand cubic meters of timber were used, a large amount of reinforcing steel and barbed wire. I must say that back in July-August 1941, the command of the Moscow

Military District, foreseeing possible fierce battles

on the outskirts of the capital, created a system of rear defensive lines, including the Vyazemskaya, Mozhaisk lines and the Moscow defense zone. The Vyazemskaya line, which was equipped 50-80 kilometers from the front line of defense of the troops of the Western Front, consisted of two defensive lanes. The Mozhaisk line was built to cover the distant approaches to Moscow, in the Volokolamsk, Mozhaisk, Maloyaroslavets directions. In addition, nine intermediate lines were equipped in these most important directions. Fortified areas of the field type were also created. Pre-prepared defensive positions made it possible to effectively use relatively small reserves, holding back the onslaught of the Germans.

It should also be emphasized that in November 1941, and especially during the climax of the battle towards the beginning of December, the enemy began to lose air superiority. Our additional aviation units were deployed near Moscow, equipped with new Pe-2 bombers, Il-2 attack aircraft, MiG-2 fighters, armed with rockets. In the most critical period of the battle near Moscow, we brought fresh reserves into battle and not obsolete, but new military equipment. I cannot fail to point out one more role of the NKVD troops in the battle near Moscow.

In connection with the rapid advance of the enemy, operational information and the use of high-frequency communications acquired tremendous importance. This connection was entirely in the hands of the NKVD. It is clear that operational information using HF communications played a colossal role in making the right military decisions. Headquarters, Stalin could reliably manage the situation and control the fighting over HF. The work of the high-frequency communications troops during this difficult period deserves admiration: in some cases, high-frequency communications were carried out directly even in the battle formations of battalions and regiments that fought heavy defensive battles at the forefront. Despite

the fact that Moscow was a front-line city, the German bombing did not cause tangible damage to it. There was no significant damage. This became possible thanks to the multi-tiered air defense system of the capital, created back in July-August. The fact that there was almost no destruction from the bombing in Moscow had a strong effect on Western diplomats.

and specialists who, before coming to us, were familiar with the destructive actions of German aviation in Poland, France, Holland and Belgium. It is significant that immeasurably greater than Moscow (a front-line city in October 1941-January 1942) were the destruction of London and other English cities subjected to fierce German air raids. All foreign representatives who found themselves in Moscow were struck by the atmosphere of calm, restraint and clear discipline. Now it is quite obvious that the air defense, created from ten belts, showed its highest efficiency for that time. It should be emphasized that from July 30 to November 28, 1941, with the help of the Chekist authorities, the largest operations in the history of the war were carried out to disinform the enemy by creating false targets for the bombing of German aircraft in various places in Moscow

and the Moscow Region. 7 mock factory buildings, two mock elevators with all services, a mock oil depot, a mock military camp, 9 mock airfields with mock aircraft were built. All this greatly misled the enemy Air Force.

From official reports it is known that the Germans made 141 raids on Moscow, dropped 1610 high-explosive bombs. As a result, 2,200 residents of Moscow were killed and about 6,000 wounded, 167 residential buildings were destroyed and 276 were damaged. 115 industrial enterprises were also damaged. However, almost one-third - 585 high-explosive bombs

were dropped by the enemy on false objects. German pilots also dropped 158 lighting bombs on them. This is a rather significant contribution to the defense of the capital of the NKVD, in the structure of which the units of the local air defense (air defense) operated.

***Chekist partisans in the Moscow region, the organization of the
undercover underground in the capital***

Successful counter-offensive operations of the Red Army in the south near Rostov and near Tikhvin played a significant role in disrupting the enemy's plans to capture Moscow. These days we also did everything to complicate the work of the German headquarters near Moscow. A large role in this was played by the raid partisan formations of the Moscow department of the NKVD, which were formed in a short time on the basis of destruction battalions. Reconnaissance raid partisan detachments under the command of V. Karasev, M. Filonenko, I. Solntsev and D. Kaverznev defeated the headquarters of the German corps near Moscow, unnerved the enemy with their harassing raids at the most crucial moment of the battle for the capital. The advantage of these detachments was that they were recruited from Soviet, party and operational workers who knew the area and the situation in the Moscow region very well. There were operational successes. For example, in the Zhizdra region, our task force captured the son of the chairman of the provisional committee of the State Duma of Tsarist Russia, Prince Lvov, who was considered a potential contender for the leadership of the administration in the territory occupied by the Germans and who could be used by them in the event of the formation of any political groups and movements. He was sent to Moscow.

On the territory occupied by the enemy, five underground operational groups and residencies created under the auspices of the Moscow regional department of the NKVD in the area of Solnechnogorsk, Ruza, Mozhaisk and other places, effectively operated.

The situation also dictated the need to work out solutions related to the creation of the Moscow underground in case the capital was occupied by the enemy. An important direction of our work was the preparation of appropriate legends for the possible deployment of illegal residencies in Moscow. We proceeded from the premise that "legendation" should be built on the presence of "anti-Soviet groups" in the command staff of the Red Army and the remnants of counter-revolutionary monarchist organizations, the services of which, of course, the German secret services would want to use.

The organization of the secret underground in Moscow had its own fundamental differences. It was planned to create two intelligence apparatus. One - on the basis of connections and contacts of people from the party

Soviet asset. Another device was to be selected from people who had absolutely no contact with this asset in the past. Two independent from each other residencies were ordered to solve operational and combat tasks independently. Merkulov first suggested that I become the chief illegal resident of the NKVD in Moscow if it was occupied by the Germans. I agreed, but Beria objected to Merkulov with reason. It was decided (not formalized by the order of the people's commissariat) to appoint the head of the central apparatus of counterintelligence P. Fedotov to this work, with the subordination to him of all the residencies that were created along the lines of the NKVD and party-Soviet activists. (This decision now seems debatable. After all, under no circumstances should the German secret services have been given any, even a minimal opportunity to capture a figure of this level.) Beria justified this appointment by the fact that Fedotov personally knew the party and Soviet activists of the capital and most of the agents NKVD, planned to leave for underground work. This circumstance, of course, would allow Fedotov in an extreme situation to make decisions about the use of the operational staff and agents, taking into account the business qualities of people known to him personally.

In general, in a combat situation, you can successfully manage the operational staff and agents only if you personally know the capabilities of your subordinates. Therefore, I am categorically against the creation of temporary combined operational groups to solve counterintelligence tasks in a combat situation and, moreover, for reconnaissance and sabotage operations. It is very important

that, despite the difficult situation on the fronts, despite the fact that the enemy ring around Moscow was inexorably shrinking, we did not for a minute forget about the fight against the enemy's special services. It was in October 1941 that we began to recall our agents from the front, which turned out to be drafted into the ranks of the Red Army. This was done in order to prepare people for work against the enemy's special services and use them in deeply legendary operations to infiltrate the headquarters of the Abwehr and the Gestapo.

With a colossal need for people, we very carefully and carefully used valuable agents from among foreigners and political emigrants. I categorically opposed the immediate deployment of valuable agents behind enemy lines - Germans, Austrians,

Hungarians, Poles, who could work in extreme conditions and knew the situation in the countries of Europe occupied by the Germans. It was unreasonable to dispose of them for plugging holes. Therefore, as part of our special forces, they were always kept in a special reserve, in the most extreme case. (Only the Spaniards took part in the OMSBON in the battles near Moscow.) We "saved" the international part of the special forces also because we had to reckon with the possibility of unleashing military operations against us from the territories of countries supporting Nazi Germany that were not yet involved in the war. Since I objected to the participation of

internationalists in heavy fighting, I ~~had~~ ^{agreed} many conflicts ^{warriors} with the activists of the Comintern. The Spanish, Hungarian and Italian combat groups literally rushed into battle, turning on this occasion in violation of subordination (they were on the staff of the OMSBON, that is, the NKVD troops) to the leadership of the Comintern and to Stalin.

One more important point should be noted. We are talking about the turbulent situation that has developed in Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan and Manchuria on our border with Japan. In connection with the aggravation of the threat of war, possible unforeseen circumstances, we took precautionary measures, intensified intelligence and operational work on the border with these countries. And it is no coincidence that during this period the leadership of the security agencies went to a significant increase in our reconnaissance and sabotage agent apparatus in these areas. Qualified, most experienced personnel - L. Eitingon, L. Vasilevsky, G. Mordvinov, I. Agayants, M. Alakhverdov, N. Belkin, M. Fridgut - were sent to Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, where there was a potential danger of unleashing a new the outbreak of hostilities, where a unique opportunity began to take shape for military-technical, political and intelligence cooperation with our allies in a secret war against Germany and Japan. But this is special

subject.

I remember that on October 5 Merkulov summoned me to his office. From him we went to Beria's office, who informed us that the situation on the Western Front had deteriorated sharply. He said that the enemy went on the offensive, apparently, he had one goal -

go to the capital. Based on this, we had to prepare for the worst. By this time we were already in the barracks

position.

In connection with the advance of the Germans, the question arose of the evacuation of units of the central apparatus of the NKVD and of interaction with units of the Moscow Directorate of the NKVD. At the same time, the task of preparing the Moscow underground was set. In total, it was supposed to create 12 illegal residencies, five of which were to be involved outside the capital, in the territory occupied by the enemy. They were staffed by employees of the apparatus of the district city departments of the NKVD. We also worked closely with party organs, which, however, were mainly interested in propaganda work. But without party bodies it was impossible to solve the problem of creating a mass underground and an effective underground network, because the party apparatus had a centralized account of all the communists on whom it was possible to rely. To provide for the underground, about 100 food bases and weapons depots were to be secretly established near

Moscow and in the city. It was necessary to prepare the so-called route agents in order to regularly transmit information about the movement of enemy units near Moscow.

Three radio centers were created in the shortest possible time, especially in case of unforeseen circumstances, one of which, in Kuchino, was supposed to duplicate communication with illegal residencies in Moscow. Interestingly, one of our underground radio stations was deployed in the basement of the puppet theater of Sergei Vladimirovich Obraztsov, which was then located on Mayakovsky Square.

To coordinate the activities of the Soviet party underground, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks was supposed to leave a relatively little-known person - the head of the school department of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks Varvara Pivovarova. It was also planned to involve the former secretaries of the district committees of the party, in particular, the secretary of the Moskvoretsky district committee of the party, Olimpiada Kozlova (later became the rector of the Engineering and Economic Institute and the founder of the Academy of Management, the prototype of the current Academy of Management), as well as Nina Popova (who later became the chairman of the Committee of Soviet Women).

In Moscow, the head of the counterintelligence department of the Moscow NKVD Sergei Fedoseev was to become the main coordinator of the underground. It was supposed to create a special residency headed by Major of State Security (later Major General) Viktor Drozdov. He had extensive experience in fighting gangs and the nationalist underground in Ukraine. Shortly before the war, he was appointed deputy chief of the Moscow police. One of the residencies was to be headed by Pavel Meshik, the former People's Commissar for State Security of Ukraine. He was entrusted with the organization of sabotage on the highways of Moscow.

In the shortest possible time, colossal work was carried out to select people for the underground. It was very laborious, requiring a lot of attention and patience. It was necessary to issue passports, create legends for the people who remained in Moscow. Most of all, we puzzled over what a plausible answer should have been to the inevitable question: why did the person stay in Moscow?

There was a need for special production of letters from relatives. Their content was determined taking into account the biographies developed by our specialists. Correspondence with imaginary relatives was legendary according to all the rules of postal items.

In connection with the preparation of the underground, we also undertook another special action. Registration and registration books were seized, destroyed or rewritten. All this work was carried out in a very difficult environment and in the shortest possible time. The leadership of the NKVD was regularly reported on the preparation of special measures.

In addition to me, Melnikov, Eitingon, M. Maklyarsky, L. Stashko were engaged in this hard work around the clock as heads of intelligence areas, OMSBON commanders M. Orlov, V. Gridnev, S. Ivanov, S. Volokitin, A. Avdeev, operatives P. Massya, A. Shitov (Alekseev). We also prepared "bait" for the

enemy. Presumably, she could become Lev Konstantinovich Knipper, a composer, a German by birth, who lived with his wife Margarita on Gogolevsky Boulevard. The tasks assigned to the Knipper group were special. He became a special agent-group leader and was supposed to act in Moscow according to the "D" order, that is, for

the implementation of acts of sabotage, operations and actions of personal retaliation against the leaders of the German Reich, if they appeared in the captured capital.

A special role was assigned to a young employee of the first (intelligence) department of the NKVD, its special group, junior lieutenant A. Kamaeva-Filonenko, who, under the guise of an activist in the Baptist community, would coordinate the use of installed camouflaged explosive devices. She alone was instructed to set off powerful explosive devices on a special signal, which were supposed to be planted in the places where the leaders of the Nazi regime or the Wehrmacht command appeared. Another person was supposed to act at great risk as a bait for the German secret services. His advantage was that he was known to German intelligence during the First World War, being in Germany on an internship even before 1914. He was known in art history circles in Berlin and Leipzig. Since the 1920s, Aleksey Alekseevich Sidorov, our source "Stary", actively helped the OGPU-NKVD in the fight against not imaginary, but real German espionage. (Sidorov is a prominent Soviet art historian, bibliologist and bibliophile, corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, professor at Moscow State University from 1916 to 1950.) In the autumn of 1941, he was supposed to cover our militants in Moscow. Later, he played an important role in back-up measures to ensure the radio game with German intelligence in 1942-1945 in the now widely known "Monastery" case.

The Germans did not take Moscow, but we awarded L. Knipper and his wife, A. Sidorov, with military medals for the great work in preparing the underground. Another participant in the preparation of the illegal military apparatus in the formidable autumn of 1941, retired colonel I. Shchors, is still alive in Moscow. By the way, he presented the medal "For the Defense of Moscow" to Alexei

Alekseevich Sidorov. These people were true patriots of our Motherland, devoted to it until their last breath, despite the fact that their closest relatives were repressed and died tragically. I wanted to get their loved ones out of the camps in 1941, but it was too late - no one was left alive. But we directly told Alexei Alekseevich and Margarita Garikovna Knipper about this.

It was impossible to cheat with people who were ready for self-sacrifice. Despite the heavy and sad news, these people never once doubted the rightness and justice of the difficult path they had chosen to fight against the worst enemies of our Motherland.

For retaliation against the German command under the leadership of M. Maklyarsky, we also prepared an ensemble of actors led by the "Whistleman" - Nikolai Khokhlov, who later became a defector. It was planned that Khokhlov, together with a group of acrobats, speaking to German senior officers, during a pop act - juggling - were to throw grenades at them.

In order to carry out reconnaissance and sabotage activities behind enemy lines, we transferred 43 employees of the central apparatus of the NKVD, 28 employees of the NKVD department for Moscow and the Moscow region to an illegal position throughout the city of Moscow. 11 operatives were to lead 85 intelligence groups, covering 400 people in the intelligence network. Each operative had two or three group guides in touch, who in turn contacted two or four agents or informants. For a special reserve outside of Moscow and the region, we additionally created 28 residencies covering 87 people in the intelligence and information network.

The main focus was collection of intelligence information. The main forces from the agents were aimed at this. We planned to attract 200 people to carry out acts of sabotage. 101 people were selected to carry out actions of special retribution against members of the Nazi leadership. Most of our agents and informants were

assigned by us to carry out special disinformation work. For these purposes, we abandoned the intelligence and information network of the Moscow Department of the NKVD and the special residency, which was transferred to the subordination of V. Drozdov. Acting as deputy manager of the pharmacy business in Moscow, he was instructed to gain confidence in the Germans. In order to establish good relations with them, he had to put at their disposal a certain amount of medicines. For disinformation and distribution of leaflets, it was supposed

use more than 160 people from the party-Soviet underground apparatus. The

operational staff, transferred to an illegal position, and part of the agents were provided with food supplies for two to three months. To communicate with them, we have developed appropriate passwords.

On October 20, 1941, an order was issued concerning the mining of the most important objects of the capital. It was preliminary. It was possible to blow up these objects only by special order, and a number of objects of historical value, for example, the Column Hall of the House of Unions (the former Assembly of the Nobility), the Bolshoi Theater and other equally famous and historically valuable buildings could be blown up only if they were used to house the highest German leadership (whose appearance, as we now see, was erroneously assumed in the capital). A large group of specialists in geological exploration and explosive work was

transferred to the disposal of the NKVD of the USSR. Particular attention was paid to the mining of Goznak. We could not allow any of our official forms to fall into the hands of the Germans.

There were also shortcomings in this work. So, preparations for the destruction of the most important objects were also going on in the Moscow region. A serious incident occurred at the Mytishchi plant of the People's Commissariat of Arms, which was considered the leader in the industry and appeared on the GKO list. His evacuation into the interior of the country was personally directed by Boris Lvovich Vannikov, who later became the people's commissar of ammunition. The unique equipment of the plant was hidden in containers in October 1941 and was supposed to be sent to the East. The factory administration, succumbing to panic, decided to evacuate their families with all their belongings on the same day, along with the dispatch of the equipment. For this, all passenger transport of the enterprise was involved. The evacuation took place in front of a significant part of the workers. This aroused their indignation and caused a spontaneously organized rally. A deputy was sent to the plant. People's Commissar of Internal Affairs I. Serov. The equipment was evacuated. The management of the enterprise and the protesters were repressed and rehabilitated only after Stalin's death.

NKVD takes Moscow under special protection

On October 12, 1941, a top secret GKO decree under No. 765 "On the protection of the Moscow zone" appeared. It stated in particular:

"In connection with the approach of the front line to Moscow and the need to establish strict order in the rear sectors of the front adjacent to the territory of Moscow, the State Defense Committee decides:

1. Instruct the NKVD of the USSR to take under special protection the zone adjacent to Moscow from the west and south and along the Kalinin, Rzhev, Mozhaishk, Tula, Kolomna, Kashira lines. The specified zone is divided into seven Kalininsky, Volokolamsky, Mozhaysky, sectors: Maloyaroslavetsky, Serpukhov, Kolomensky, Kashirsky.

2. Appoint the Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR, Commissar of State Security of the III rank, comrade. Serov. 3. Organize the security headquarters of the Moscow zone

under the NKVD of the USSR, subordinating to it operationally the NKVD troops located in the zone - 6 thousand people by special calculation, the police, regional organizations of the NKVD, fighter battalions and detachments.

4. Establish that the road maintenance regiments, the road administration of NPOs, in operational matters of organizing traffic control and establishing order on the most important highways leading to Moscow, are obliged to unconditionally follow the instructions of the heads of the relevant sectors of the security headquarters of the Moscow zone of the NKVD of the USSR.

This decree was signed by Stalin. It is evidence that, firstly, order had been established in the rear areas adjacent to the combat zone, and secondly, it spoke of the exceptional role played by the NKVD in the battle for Moscow.

After the evacuation of the main operational departments, the archive and other units to Kuibyshev and Gorky, the leadership of the NKVD, including L. Beria, V. Merkulov, B. Kobulov, I. Serov, V. Chernyshev, was located in the Higher School of Fire Protection, located near VDNKh. Now there is also the Higher School of Fire Protection of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Beria's office was then located there. Kobulov, Serov, Chernyshev and I settled down in the common office next door - in a large classroom.

These days we have experienced several stressful and dramatic moments. For example, on October 15 and 16, when the situation escalated, panic rumors arose among the refugees on the Enthusiast Highway, which spread like lightning. But thanks to the timely measures taken and the competent actions of the NKVD workers, there was no significant damage to the elements of panic

did not inflict.

On October 16, the transmitting radio station of the People's Commissariat of the Navy in Tomilin and the receiving radio station of the same People's Commissariat in Veshnyaki were unexpectedly put out of action, in addition, the radio bureau and automatic telephone exchange located in the People's Commissariat of the Navy were destroyed. As a result, shipping companies in Leningrad, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, Astrakhan, and Makhachkala lost radio communications. All this unnerved the leadership and, naturally, the most stringent measures were taken against the head of the central communications center of the People's Commissariat of the Navy, Berezin. As it turned out, it was he who gave the order to destroy the station and transmitted it by direct telephone to the heads of the radio stations located in Tomilin and Veshnyaki. These actions caused great damage and temporarily lost control of maritime transport.

Interestingly, our actions to create the Moscow underground did not pass by the enemy. In the report of the headquarters of the German Security Police (SD) on the situation in the USSR for February 1942, which we got in 1944, there were plans to create "special combat Bolshevik organizations of the NKVD in Moscow." It was pointed out that in Moscow the illegal militant organization of the NKVD posed a significant threat. It was also said that it was created in case of the occupation of Moscow by German troops,

it was noted that the main thing for the Russians was to carry out actions against the German troops, to organize

sabotage and terror. In the battles near Moscow, OMSBON suffered its first serious losses - the first commissar of the brigade, at one time secretary of the party committee of the NKVD intelligence department, captain of state security A. Maksimov and deputy brigade commander Colonel I. Tretyakov were killed. More than 50 commandos died in battles on the near approaches to the capital. However, the approach of a turning point in the battle for Moscow in our favor was felt more and more clearly. I was especially fascinated by the high level of combat skill of the soldiers and officers A. Avdeev, V. Tokarev, E. Solomon, A. Sakhovaler, M. Breusov, D. Gudkov, P. Dmitriev, M. Egortsev, A. Shestakov, M. Petrushina and many others. 75 special forces, who distinguished themselves in the battle near Moscow, "for the exemplary performance of command assignments and inflicting heavy damage to the enemy"

were awarded high government awards. It was in the battles near Moscow that the future leaders of the famous partisan units Heroes of the Soviet Union D. Medvedev, E. Mirkovsky, M. Prudnikov, V. Karasev, B. Galushkin underwent a baptism of fire behind enemy lines and in a mine-subversive

A few more strokes to the Moscow battle. I must say that the offensive of our troops near Moscow on a full scale was kept in the strictest confidence. And even despite the fact that I actually headed the independent intelligence force that we will take in Moscow, I was advantage," I quote Beria's words, "the situation that is favorable for us in December, when the German troops lose their offensive possibilities". It is interesting that we in the NKVD, according to information from our partisan groups behind German lines, and the military in the General Staff came to the general conclusion at the end of November 1941 that the enemy was exhausted and stopped by the Red Army. In the NKVD line, we were then guided not by special reports, but simply by questioning our commanders of partisan sabotage formations operating behind enemy lines. I cannot but recall in this connection one of the leaders of such detachments, D. Kaverznev, who died heroically

an employee of the regional department of the NKVD I. Solntsev, who became one of the first Chekists -

Heroes of the Soviet Union. The transition of the Red Army to a large-scale counteroffensive on December 5 was a pleasant surprise for me. I understood that events at the front were changing for the better for us. Already in November, the growing confidence of our command in the outcome of the battle was felt. In Headquarters, in the military leadership of the capital, a regime of tense calm was established. The crisis in the battle near Moscow after the November holidays of 1941 was over.

The radical change in the situation near Moscow in our favor posed new tasks for the NKVD bodies. His special forces, despite the losses suffered, were still a highly combat-ready striking force, now capable of acting on the communications of the retreating enemy. The fact that we did not lose our cadres of demolition and saboteurs in the crucible of the Moscow battle turned out to be a particularly colossal plus. After all, it was they who later showed themselves brilliantly in the guerrilla war.

The lesson of the battle near Moscow lies in the fact that the state security special forces at the critical moment of the battle were the special-purpose reserve of

the Headquarters. On December 20, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Cheka, there were no solemn meetings, no solemn speeches were made. Beria gathered that day an operational meeting of the leadership. On it, on Stalin's instructions, he set before me the responsible tasks of deploying front-line work in close cooperation with the command of the Red Army. It was given exceptional importance to shifting the focus of our efforts, in accordance with Zhukov's instructions, to the destruction of the communications of the retreating German troops. Responsible for the implementation of the action plan of our special detachments in the winter of 1941-1942 were my new deputy V. Kakuchaya and my contact in the underground in France in 1937 L. Stashko. At the

same meeting, the question of the lessons of the fight against the Nazi agents operating in our rear was also considered. In Beria's speech, there was a concern about the potential that the Nazi special services and their satellites have to wage a secret war against the Soviet state after the defeat

near Moscow. There was concern that the entire mass of disaffected people associated with the remnants of the anti-Soviet underground would be used by the Germans, along with a large number of prisoners of war and deserters who ended up in the territory occupied by the enemy. We already had information about the formation of local administrations and auxiliary police by the invaders, and this, of course, could not but alert us.

Beria also set the task: to transfer efforts in counterintelligence operations to the introduction of our especially proven agents in the Nazi services and the occupation administration. This task was considered as the most important direction of the work of the NKVD behind the front.

At the same operational meeting (where Fedotov, who had resumed his duties as head of counterintelligence, and the head of the transport department, Milshtein, who headed military counterintelligence Abakumov, were present), Beria emphasized that a new period of inevitably protracted war with Nazi Germany was coming, when we would have to wage it for a long time without the support of a second allied front. And therefore, in addition to front-line work behind enemy lines, under these conditions, in order to significantly expand the collection of information that allows us to assess how our army, our resources and reserves meet the requirements of such

a war. Specific orders were given for undercover coverage and control over the progress of construction and compliance with the deadlines (set personally by Stalin) for the commissioning of all the main enterprises of the defense industry and engineering, evacuated to the East in the summer and autumn of 1941. Under the close control of the NKVD bodies also passed the monitoring of compliance with the schedules of railway transportation and orders for the distribution of food resources at the front and in the rear, monitoring the state of sanitary and epidemiological surveillance in order to have proactive information to counter the outbreak of mass typhoid diseases in the rear of the Red Army.

At this conference, I reported the first results of the activities of our residencies and partisan detachments behind enemy lines. The radio stations of operational groups in Nikolaev, Odessa,

Kyiv, Kharkov and Voroshilovgrad, the flow of information about the situation in the occupied territory gradually improved.

I must say that the leadership of the Soviet state security agencies in the extreme situation of 1941 successfully solved the most important organizational problem: a system of effective interaction between intelligence and counterintelligence agencies was created, effective forms of using border, internal troops and special forces units were determined. This ensured the uninterrupted, well-coordinated and efficient work of our special services during the critical and, in fact, decisive period (which began so unsuccessfully for us) of the Patriotic War. It should also be

said about our mistakes in assessing the situation at the end of 1941. This is a special topic. Optimism dominated all conclusions and forecasts of the development of the situation on the fronts after the defeat of the Germans near Moscow, Rostov and Tikhvin. I personally know that during this period, Stalin was in an excellent mood: for him, the inevitability of Germany's defeat in a long protracted war with us, the USA and England was obvious. Meeting with Eden in Moscow in 1941, he was fully informed through undercover channels about the plans of our allies. It became clear that they were bogged down in a war with Japan and that the situation in the Far Eastern theater no longer posed a mortal threat to us during our war with Germany. This also put us in an optimistic mood. But at the same time, I would like to note that at that time our illusions were also associated with an insufficient understanding of the nature and tactics of the armed struggle against German fascism.

It seemed to us that the winter itself would break German communications, they thought that the German army would run, not adapted to fight in the winter. It was assumed that the events of 1812 were about to be repeated.

All this was based on the intelligence reports received from Berlin and Brussels from the Red Chapel about the depletion of gasoline and ammunition, about the wear and tear of German equipment in the battles on the Eastern

Front. I, inspired by the victory, almost daily wrote postcards and letters to the family evacuated to Ufa, about the close and complete defeat of the enemy. Although I must note that, despite the turning point in the battle

Moscow, the central apparatus and all services returned to Moscow in full and only started working in full mode in the spring of 1942.

Of course, the decrease in the activity of German aviation was a reassuring factor for us. Rare raids on Moscow in December 1941 also indicated a radical change in hostilities in our favor. Interestingly, in assessing the prospects

for the development of the situation on the Soviet-German front, not only we were mistaken, but also the intelligence of the allies and analysts of the Finnish military intelligence. After the defeat near Moscow, Hitler was predicted in the West a decisive defeat in the winter campaign of 1942. French and Finnish experts mistakenly believed that there was nothing left for the German command but to try to make a desperate rush to Moscow in the summer of 1942 in order to decide the outcome of the war in their favor.

In January 1942, when the Germans had already been thrown back from Moscow, we obtained an important document - a reconnaissance report from the General Staff of the French Armed Forces on the situation of the German troops on the Eastern Front. It was dated January 3, 1942. It stated serious disagreements in the German military elite, in particular, the fact that Hitler had dismissed Field Marshal Brauchitsch, who commanded the ground forces. It followed from the report that the main forces of the armored forces in Germany, all the elite divisions, almost all aviation, were thrown into the assault on Moscow. The results of the battles were pointed out: three-quarters of the divisions and armored forces of the Germans participating in the battles were completely exhausted materially, physically and morally.

Unfortunately, this intelligence report drew a completely wrong conclusion. It was said that if the Russian offensive continued after January 15, 1942, with the same intensity, then the Germans, forced to strengthen the front and make constant replacements, would not be able to get the necessary respite to reorganize their formations and prepare a new big offensive in Russia, planned for the spring. It is curious that French analysts believed that a new German offensive could take place, but would not bring Hitler the desired results. The French informant believed that even if the "Anglo-Saxon factor" was not taken into account,

the Germans will need 1942, 1943 and even 1944 to put an end to Russia, because Germany is completely stuck in Russia.

A leaflet with information about the source of the message was attached to the report. He was a high-ranking officer, the former head of the intelligence bureau of the Estonian army. After the accession of Estonia to the USSR, he went to serve in the Finnish army. At that time, he served as a liaison officer of the Finnish General Staff under the commander of the German Army Group North. Interestingly, he always admired Germany, firmly believed in her victory, which, in his opinion, could contribute to the restoration of the independence of the Baltic states.

Our scouts Zoya and Boris Rybkin, who obtained this document in Stockholm, of course, did a great job. But the analysis it contained was highly subjective. A clearly overestimated assessment was given to our capabilities to develop the counter-offensive near Moscow that had been successfully launched in December. But

here's what's interesting: at a meeting at Headquarters, Stalin repeated almost word for word what was contained in this intelligence report, suggesting that the General Staff develop measures for a wide winter offensive of the Red Army against the Germans on all fronts.

During the battle near Moscow, the individual training of the two most effective special agents of the NKVD - the NKGB during the Great Patriotic War - A. Demyanov (Heine) and N. Kuznetsov (Colonist) was honed. Both already had extensive experience in undercover work. However, now it was necessary to redirect them to the active combat "development" of the German special services, to nurture illegal militants out of them. Demyanov and Kuznetsov, due to their biographical data and their abilities, could be effectively used in different roles. Why did Kuznetsov become precisely an illegal

militant who successfully operated behind enemy lines? The fact is that for work in this capacity, he corresponded much more than Demyanov. Demyanov was an undisputed authority in emigration and was registered by the German special services under his real name, as he came from the family of the Cossack ataman Golovатов, well-known in the country and abroad. Kuznetsov, on the other hand, was never abroad and therefore could not be substituted for the enemy as an officer of the German army on the terms of a long stay or service in his

intelligence agencies, since immediately any check, if he was enrolled in a permanent position in the headquarters of the German special services or commandant units, suggested his failure. We planned to use him in the Moscow underground not as a Wehrmacht officer, but as a Russified German Schmidt. He was more suitable

for occasionally appearing in the form of a German officer in the rear facilities of the Wehrmacht, in places of deployment of temporary occupation personnel, where German counterintelligence agencies do not need to conduct a special check on a temporarily seconded officer if he is not allowed to secret work and documents. Kuznetsov, despite a significant gap in his operational biography

- he was not used as an agent of our foreign intelligence at home and abroad, had no real idea about life in the West - made a strong impression on me with his concentration and determination. He possessed instant reactions to the interlocutor, literally subordinated him to himself. Everything indicated that he had some secret approach to people, he knew how to win them over, to fall in love with him. Then I had the idea that it would be more expedient to train him as a special agent-militant. Such a person could, with his appearance, confident demeanor, pave his way to a prominent representative of the German administration, achieve a personal reception. I immediately got the impression of the enormous potential of this person, of a person who can effectively infiltrate the enemy camp. And then my intuition failed me.

Later, D. Medvedev (Timofei), appointed in early 1942 the head of the secret staff of our service, was fully and correctly assessed the abilities and enormous potential of Kuznetsov. He chose him as a promising special agent-militant for his task force "Winners" behind enemy lines. What was the peculiarity of Kuznetsov's preparation? First of all, he

was taught the technique of reaching influential people among Wehrmacht officers and the occupation administration. We aimed it at the study of the smallest details in the behavior of a person - the object of his individual development. The colonist was trained in

unforeseen circumstances that may arise, for example, it is being developed by the enemy or is in the field of view of external surveillance. They taught him to act in areas where a state of emergency was introduced to control all vehicles, that is, he was created real operational situations behind enemy lines. S. Okun, L. Stashko, N. Krupennikov and F. Bakin taught him the skills to make decisions independently in a difficult operational environment. Moreover, the main thing in his training was the multivariance of leaving and breaking away from the enemy. Situations of potential failure were analyzed, the capture by the enemy of the radio operator of his operational group, the rules for the work of illegal residency, etc. Such training fully justified itself. Kuznetsov was sent behind enemy lines as a real specialist, ready for combat work in extreme situations.

But it should be noted that we had few special agents like Kuznetsov. True, we had a significant special reserve of Austrian and German anti-fascist emigrants, among whom F. Kleining brilliantly showed himself and was nominated for the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. However, Kuznetsov was an outstanding person, in terms of his level of thinking and outlook, he significantly surpassed other prominent figures in our intelligence apparatus. This is all the more surprising that he did not have a higher education. His personal life did not work out, but he lived a short, bright, albeit hard, uneven life. In the award list for posthumously conferring the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, signed by me, it was symbolically indicated, on the one hand, the absence of a special officer rank, on the other, his permanent place of work and address, the NKGB of the USSR, were indicated and underlined.

We must still be proud of the fact that in the Great Patriotic War the German secret services and their accomplices were not able to oppose us agents and officers of the caliber of Heine and Kolonist, such different, prominent personalities in the history of Soviet intelligence.

About the spare room of Stalin's Headquarters in Moscow

In June 1992, we met in the hospital with my old acquaintance, one of the leaders of Stalin's guard, Major General D. Shadrin. Walking in the park, we seemed to be transported with him to the events of the summer-autumn of 1941. A year before the war, Shadrin was appointed head of the third special department of the NKVD of the USSR.

Immediately after the start of the war, Beria set the task for him: to find a place in Moscow where the Headquarters could, hiding from the bombings, work constantly. I. Serov supervised this issue as deputy people's commissar. For the reserve premises of the Stavka, Shadrin looked after a small building on Kirov Street, now the reception of the Minister of Defense is located there. Shadrin even earlier wanted to take him under a special residency. Several times on this occasion they called the People's Commissar of Health Miterev, who was in charge of the mansion. But he didn't give up. When Shadrin, together with Serov, came to inspect the building once again, they ran into the commandant, who greeted them sarcastically: "We've arrived again!" Nevertheless, they went inside, inspected all the premises. Why did

you choose this mansion? We knew that a tunnel had been dug right under him with access to the platform of the Kirovskaya metro station. Then his passage was littered with some bags and boxes. Medicines were stored here. They gave the command to release everything in four hours. The engineering units of the Moscow Military District and sappers were alarmed. It was necessary to report on the work immediately. Serov went to Beria, but he was not there. He was with Stalin. Serov and Shadrin went to the Kremlin. Stalin, of course, did not accept them on such a petty issue, and entrusted everything to Poskrebyshev. The issue of the building of the People's Commissariat

of Health, which had not moved for a long time, was immediately resolved. Poskrebyshev called Miterev and confirmed that, on Stalin's orders, it was necessary to immediately vacate the premises by 4 p.m. on June 23, and the Red Cross apparatus that worked there should be moved to any sanatorium near Moscow. "Which one you like, at least from the administration of the Council of People's Commissars," Poskrebyshev concluded. By the deadline, everything was

ready - the premises were vacated, the tunnel was cleared. Shadrin reported to Beria: "You can see everything

prepared." And so all the members of the Politburo, except for Stalin, Kalinin and someone else, arrived on Kirov Street. First, they were taken to the mansion, then the members of the Politburo went down in the freight elevator to the subway. Trains at the station "Kirovskaya" no longer stopped. Everyone liked the place of the reserve Headquarters. It was possible to organize the work well. "Here, between the pillars," Beria pointed to two columns with his hand, "make Stalin's office and a reception room." Decided how best to do it.

Then they went upstairs, again went into the mansion. Beria, turning to Shadrin, said: "Here will be Stalin's second office, here is Molotov's office, here is mine, and here there will be a reception room for 50 people. You will put tables. The term is four days. Shadrin pleaded: "Comrade Commissar, how can you manage to do all this in four days? One day has already passed. There are three left." But Beria was adamant. Shadrin did not sleep for four days. At 16.00 on June 26, Beria reported:

"Comrade People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, you can come." And again all the members of the Politburo arrived, except for Stalin. "Well done!" Beria said after the examination. In the evening, at six o'clock, Beria called Stalin: "Comrade

Stalin, you can see the premises." Stalin asked: "Where?" Beria replied: "The guards know." Stalin arrived. Again Shadrin led everyone everywhere. Everyone liked it.

There was a kitchen downstairs, everything was repaired there too, and dinner was cooked there. Shadrin did not eat anything that day. Therefore, he turned to Vlasik, the head of Stalin's security, with a proposal to go down to the kitchen and have a bite to eat. As soon as they sat down at the table, an officer from the guards ran: "Stalin is calling."

In the mansion along the corridor, where the reception room was, tables were laid, and the management, after familiarizing themselves with the premises, went there. Shadrin also went up here: "Comrade Stalin, I have arrived at your order." Stalin asked: "Are you in charge here?" - "Yes sir!" came the answer. Beria: "Pour him a glass of cognac!" Shadrin pleaded: "Comrade Stalin, I didn't eat all day and didn't sleep all night! And I don't drink at all, I almost don't drink at all." Stalin poured himself a glass of cognac, went up to Shadrin and handed him a filled glass: "Thank you for the good work, for the made

shelter. Cheers!" Shadrin again: "Comrade Stalin, I can't drink, I haven't eaten anything." Stalin: "Your health and thank you for the good work." He drank and again turned to Shadrin: "Do you want a drink?" He drank. Then he did not remember anything: how they brought him to the office, and how he slept for a day and a half. When I woke up, I called the secretary of the department: "What time is it?" - asked him. "Why didn't you wake me up?" In response, I heard: "I was ordered not to wake you."

Then, at the end of 1941, they began to make a bomb shelter for Stalin in the Kremlin. At the end of its construction, Stalin was no longer in the spare Headquarters on Kirovskaya. The building on Kirov Street, where Stalin's original shelter was, is still standing, it has only been rebuilt somewhat.

Ceremonial meeting at Mayakovskaya

Quite a lot has been written about the solemn meeting dedicated to the 24th anniversary of the October Revolution, which took place on November 6, 1941 at the Mayakovskaya metro station. I would like to dwell only on a number of points that excited me and remembered for a lifetime.

I learned about the meeting, which was supposed to open at 8 pm, only three hours before it began. Later, I learned that a lot of work had been done to prepare it the day before. On November 5, Beria, Malenkov and Mikoyan visited the metro station. On that day, it was closed to train traffic and used as a bomb shelter. Enormous work was carried out on the equipment of the station. This

was done not only by the security department of the NKVD, but also by the workers of the metro. The station has turned into a beautiful hall. On the side where the first-aid post is now, they built a stage. She was hung with velvet. They erected a bust of Lenin. In the hall itself, chairs were arranged, the floor was covered with carpets. Below, above the escalator, hung a red banner with the inscription: "Long live the XXIV anniversary of the October Revolution!".

On November 6, German aviation carried out its next raid on Moscow. On this occasion, an air alert was announced. The end was given to her at a quarter to seven. There was only a little time left before the opening of the solemn

meeting. Then I enjoyed great confidence of the leadership and I was allocated a seat in the third row, close to the presidium and the established rostrum. At the same time, at the secretariat of the NKVD, I also received a personalized pass for the parade on Red Square, which was to take place the next day. The pass to the parade was not filled out and I myself entered my name on it. A small pass with an invitation to a solemn meeting, printed in small print in the special printing house of the NKVD, was nameless and valid only upon presentation of the document. The Mayakovskaya metro station has

acquired the appearance of a real theater. Loudspeakers hung around so that the speaker's voice could be heard well. There was a train on one side of the station. The doors of the carriages were open. They set up a buffet. The country's

leadership arrived on a special train from the opposite side and got out of the car onto the station platform. Stalin was greeted with a standing ovation. All were in

military uniform, in tunics, with orders. Those present understood the solemnity of what was happening, understood that this meeting would go down in history.

It was opened by the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Moscow Council Pronin. Then they listened attentively to Stalin's report. After his speech, the hall erupted in applause. Stalin gave the signal several times to stop them, but the audience continued to applaud. Those sitting in the back rows, in order to better see Stalin and the members of the Politburo, stood on the backs of their chairs. The guards tried to restrain them, but nothing came of it. The Soviet military and party

activists could not be appeased. When Stalin, along with Malenkov and Beria, began to leave the presidium, the applause resumed. They were so strong that Stalin was forced to return to the presidium table. The ovation did not stop for a long time. Stalin shook his head and pointed to his watch. Waves of enthusiastic inspiration raged through the hall for about

those present were confident in a close victory near Moscow, despite the difficult situation at the front. I found noticeable

changes in Stalin. I had something to compare. I met him in 1940. Calmness and self-confidence remained unchanged, but it seemed to me that physically he had passed a little. After the concert, which ended the solemn meeting, people

left the metro lobby in high spirits. I mentally returned to the words of Stalin addressed to us, and thought what else could be done to change the situation at the front in our favor. I imagined the participation of OMSBON in the parade on Red Square, the regiment of the brigade under the command of Colonel S. Ivanov was supposed to take part in it. The parade itself was kept a deep secret. The fighters and the regiment commander did not know about him, although the last two weeks before him they were engaged in enhanced drill training. Ivanov received an order to participate in the parade only on the afternoon of November 6, 1941, when he was sent to the disposal of General K. Sinilov, the commandant of Moscow, for a meeting of the commanders of the units participating in the parade. I did not notice how I walked from

the Mayakovskaya metro station to Lubyanka. It was a frosty evening. But I didn't feel cold at all. The next day, November 7, 1941, the OMSBON

regiment, led by Colonel Ivanov, clearly typing a step, walked along the pavement of Red Square in front of the Mausoleum. Our soldiers represented at the parade the fighters and officers of the NKVD special forces, who fought near Moscow and deep behind enemy lines.

Chapter

17. RELATIONS WITH THE ALLIES AND THE PACIFIC WAR IN 1941

In February 1992, when I was already working on the manuscript of the first book, at the request of the military prosecutor's office, I received one of the prominent English Sovietologists, Lord Battle. He was interested in a number of episodes of the secret war of the 1940s and 1950s (connected with the pardon by President B. Yeltsin of the defector N. Khokhlov). At the meeting, he reproached me that during the war years, Soviet intelligence achieved impressive success in intelligence work mainly against the Allies, and not against Nazi Germany.

But to put the question this way, I think, is completely wrong in principle. The work of Soviet intelligence to study and reveal the true intentions and plans of the allies (in order to ensure our fundamental interests in the fight against fascist Germany) was carried out for the reason that their true attitude towards us was two-faced. The efforts of our agents in the United States were aimed at understanding the policy of the American government, which, after our military failures in the summer of 1941, intended at one time to recognize Kerensky as the head of the Provisional Government of Russia in exile, allegedly with the aim of continuing the war with Hitler on the Eastern Front. How could we relate to these ideas and plans? Let it be just chatter going on within the walls of high-ranking representatives of the American administration. But we had to react to it and could not help but react. It is quite natural that these data were not evidence of American friendliness towards the Soviet Union. And no matter how ironic D. Volkogonov was about the attention of our residency in the United States to the leaders of the Russian emigration at the beginning of the war, it was certainly justified. We tried to resist

possible American plans to use anti-Soviet emigration. In view of these

circumstances, we have come to grips with and worked fruitfully to expose the double-dealing tactics of the American and British ruling circles towards the Soviet Union.

How did the British government behave in the summer of 1941? In July, we signed an alliance agreement on the war with Germany. But... On August 18, 1941, information was received by the State Defense Committee on the basis of a document obtained by our foreign residency in England. This is an instruction from the British Foreign Office to England's Chargé d'Affaires in Washington on the question of the attitude towards the Soviet Union. It says: "Our relations with the Russians are built entirely on the basis of forcing them to show our representatives in Russia their military plants and other facilities in which we are interested. So far, the Russians have not seen anything from us. Or almost nothing. In the near future, they will be shown factories producing standard military products, but they will not be allowed into experimental facilities. The chiefs of staff established a procedure according to which only such information could be given to the Russians - messages that, even if they fell into the hands of the Germans, would not give anything to the latter. It is clear that there are factories and facilities where Russians will not be allowed at all. We hope that the American authorities will not go beyond these boundaries, which we respect." Or another example. On August 1, 1941, our intelligence

obtained instructions from the British Foreign Office to the British Ambassador to Japan on British policy in the Far East in the event of a Japanese attack on the Soviet Union. It emphasized: "Our agreements with the USSR are specifically limited to joint actions only against Nazi Germany ... We do not have any contractual obligations to break off relations with Japan if it attacks the USSR. Postponing such a step will give us the opportunity to continue to observe the development of Japanese policy on the spot. We will make every effort to coordinate our policy as closely as possible with the actions of the United States. What is this, if not collusion with the Americans, infringing on our interests?

I would like to note the great success of our counterintelligence and intelligence in 1941 in stopping the intelligence work of our allies against us. The correct

use of the NKVD agent "Electrica" substituted for the American military attaché, General Faymonville, made it possible, in essence, to control the work of American military representatives.

Our intelligence and counterintelligence in studying the intelligence activities of the Anglo-American allies have always relied on data from interactions with the military and naval intelligence of the Red Army and Navy. Without our military analysts, we, of course, could not determine the meaning of the intelligence operations of the military attaches of England and the USA. Special notes from the intelligence departments of the people's commissariats of defense and the Navy gave a detailed and qualified assessment of the meaning of the actions of military and naval intelligence officers of England and the United States in Moscow, Murmansk

and Vladivostok. The joint operation of the intelligence department of the NKVD and counterintelligence to infiltrate the residency of the British embassy in Moscow was also of exceptional importance. We managed to solve this problem not immediately. Initially, it ended in failure. We wanted to contact the British through their agent in the 1920s, Count Nelidov, who was arrested by the Poles and captured by us in 1939. But the resumption of contact with him in Moscow, the British reacted with great distrust. V. Zarubin, who worked with him, did not achieve success and Nelidov hanged himself after several unsuccessful meetings with representatives of British intelligence at the Metropol

Hotel. But the leading worker of our counterintelligence, a former illegal immigrant in the United States (Granite) - Norman Borodin achieved impressive success by recruiting one of the prominent British intelligence officers. During the war years, this man played a role no less important than Kim Philby. It was Ralph Parker. In 1937-1939, he was a resident of British intelligence in Belgrade under the guise of a consul. Even then, the first contacts with him began through our agents. On October 30, 1941, Parker appeared in Moscow as a correspondent for the English newspaper The Times and a number of leading American newspapers.

one of the most valuable employees of the British residency, headed by the representative of "Intelligence Service" General Hill. It should be noted that in fact a

number of correspondents of American and British newspapers then performed the functions of the so-called intelligence sub-residents. In some cases, they themselves recruited agents, however, without taking away their respective obligations to collect intelligence, but legitimizing their actions with receipts from Soviet citizens about cooperation with the American and British mass media.

Norman Borodin successfully managed to carry out an operation to re-recruit Ralph Parker. His fate in the future is significant: the British counterintelligence felt that he was participating in a double game, and gradually Parker ceased to enjoy the trust of the Intelligence Service. In 1947-1948 he was a correspondent for the News Chronicle, and in April 1949, feeling the imminent exposure, made, as far as I remember, a written declaration of his desire to remain in the USSR. In the 1950s, Parker became a correspondent for communist and left-wing Labor newspapers and magazines in Moscow. I will not go into the whole complex of our difficult relations with the Allies in 1941. I want to emphasize, however,

that the situation in Scandinavia and the threat of unleashing a war in the Pacific had a significant impact on them. During the tense moments of the summer and autumn of 1941, Soviet intelligence information from these regions had

important for the Soviet command.

On September 9, 1941, the NKVD station in Stockholm reported to the Center information about the situation in Finland, about the heavy losses of the Finnish army, which limited its ability to assist the Germans at a critical moment in the battle for Leningrad. Most importantly, the presence of a serious pro-American orientation in the ruling circles of the country was emphasized. This has been used by us. The American government, at our request, put pressure on the Finns to stop at the old frontier and refrain from continuing the attack on Leningrad, which Hitler demanded of them.

Great help in assessing the situation in Scandinavia, in studying the interweaving of Anglo-American and German interests in this region, was rendered to us by our valuable agent "Grisha", an anti-fascist French diplomat and a source of "Ros Marie", a popular actress, an unspoken member of the Communist Party of Sweden, Zara Leandor. She was often received there at the German embassy at a high level.

In Stockholm, for the Soviet intelligence there were difficult conditions for work. Appointed there as a resident shortly before the war, A. Graur could not cope with the implementation of complex assignments. In the autumn of 1941, our residency was strengthened by experienced workers: B. Rybkin (Kin) and his assistant Z. Voskresenskaya (Irina). They managed to use our valuable agents Terenty, Klara, I. Stychkin (Abram), an operative under the roof of TASS, and somewhat smooth out the conflict relations between the intelligence apparatus and Ambassador A. Kollontai.

There are many myths about this in Soviet and post-Soviet literature. In particular, that the NKVD was following Kollontai in Sweden as a former member of the opposition, that resident Roschin (Razin, Valeryan), who had allegedly been bedridden by illness, literally from under the pillow, stole her personal archival records from her, who had replaced Rybkin, and sent them to Moscow. In

reality, the situation was different. Kollontai was considered a wayward woman. But as a person known in the international women's movement and in the past associated with the opposition, she was kept by Stalin abroad, as a bait for the West, "lined" on all sides, in the expectation that this person would be approached with some proposals, addressed to opposition circles in the Soviet leadership.

This plan, which Beria told me from the words of Molotov (at the same time, apparently, Stalin's opinion was conveyed), was that Kollontai should be kept as our outpost, open to soundings, and as a non-standard figure, in front of which any delicate questions. (In the coded correspondence between our residency and the Center, Kollontai was called "The Mistress".) We had enough reason to believe that there were certain circles in the West that were looking for such connections. But this bet on Kollontai was wrong, although the myths around her role, her archive, correspondence and

that she concealed her sympathies for the opposition, bred abroad. In the difficult

days of the autumn of 1941, having a strong position in the Swedish Foreign Ministry, we were perfectly oriented in Scandinavian politics and acted not blindfolded. We knew that the Swedes and Finns had their own interests, and we assumed that they wanted to take advantage of their buffer role in the relations of the Western countries with the Soviet Union and therefore were not interested in our complete defeat. They did not want to be alone with either Germany or England. Naturally, we proved to the Swedes that the USSR was a supporter of the strategic neutrality of Scandinavia. For this reason, we rejected American proposals to

cede Norwegian territory to us as compensation for the victory in the war with the Germans in the North. We made our answer public, although these negotiations took place in the form of secret correspondence with the allies: through our agents of influence, we brought our position to the attention of the Swedish and Norwegian leadership. Soviet contacts with representatives of the ruling circles of Scandinavia were supplemented by constant and fruitful cooperation with the left anti-fascist movement. It should also be noted that already in the autumn of 1941, the

leadership of our residency established a secret exchange of views with the influential Wallenberg family on the role of Scandinavia in this war.

It is interesting that it was then, in November, that the now well-known representative of this family, Raoul Wallenberg, while not yet in the diplomatic service, received the authority of the Swedish authorities to travel to the territories of the countries of Europe and the Soviet Union occupied by the Germans. Through the Wallenberg family, secret negotiations were begun on mediation in the division of property looted by the Nazis in the countries of Western and Eastern Europe. The circumstances of the Wallenberg case, which is hardly justified, are still shrouded in a veil of secrecy. Although eyewitnesses of his tragedy are alive. As the well-known historian L. Bezymensky told me, a prominent foreign intelligence worker of the KGB of the USSR, Lieutenant General S. Kondrashov, participated in the interrogations of Wallenberg at the Lubyanka.

In the same difficult period in Sweden, our military and naval intelligence successfully and actively operated. Through their line, important data were obtained on the movement of the German fleet, on strategic transportation, and on the situation in the Northern Theater of Operations. The

situation in the Far East was developing dramatically for us and for the allies. In this regard, I cannot but dwell in detail on the well-known myth that the supposedly Soviet military intelligence and foreign intelligence of the NKVD, with their activities in Japan and China, determined the decision of the Headquarters to transfer troops from the Far East to the Soviet-German front near Moscow in the difficult days of October 1941 of

the year. These claims first appeared in the literature on the history of intelligence in the West. Western historians proceed from the assumption that Japan's plans to unleash a war against the USSR were influenced by the information of the defector G. Lyushkov, the former plenipotentiary representative of the NKVD in the Far East. From him, they claim, the Japanese army received detailed materials about the Red Army grouping in the Far East and used them against us. However, this is just a version. Lyushkov was not aware of the plans of Moscow and our military command. Of course, he had a lot of information about the real situation in the Far East, about the confusion that was going on in the troops, about their low level of combat readiness, which manifested itself in the battles on Lake Khasan.

Lyushkov was also generally aware of the deployment of the Red Army in the Far East, but nothing more. He did not even know the agents of the NKVD in the deep, non-border regions of Manchuria. Based on his data and testimony, the Japanese themselves chose the region of the Khalkhin-Gol River for operations against Mongolia. They knew that our military grouping in Mongolia was insignificant and could not seriously oppose them. The Japanese also knew that the Mongolian troops were weak. But what was carried out by the command of the Red Army in a short time - the creation of a shock group - plunged the Japanese into complete shock. We ended up at Khalkhin Gol in extremely unfavorable conditions. Nevertheless, Zhukov, as a large and talented commander, stopped and defeated the Japanese in a risky oncoming battle, initially throwing tanks against the Japanese

unaccompanied and supported by infantry. He did this contrary to all the charters and not from a good life. He simply had no other choice. But our rapid deployment of a strike force was completely unexpected by the enemy. It's not that Sorge reported to Moscow about Lyushkov's testimony about the tactics of the

Red Army and we adjusted our actions accordingly. The point is different. Zhukov, as a talented military leader, made a quick, effective and only right decision.

Lyushkov's information contained only numerous data on arrests, intrigues "at the top", he was aware of the reprisals against the opposition. This information, no doubt, had important political, but not military significance. The Japanese shared this information with the Germans, but it came to us in a reflected form through the messages of Sorge, who was shown it by the German military attache. All this played a twofold role. At the initial stage, it was correctly used by the Japanese command in choosing a place for hostilities based on data on the low combat readiness of the Red Army. Then, in connection with the development of events at Khalkhin Gol, the massive use of tank formations by us, the Japanese command had reasonable doubts about the testimony of the defector.

The development of events did not fit into the old canons. Japanese generals were practically unable to plan a major maneuver operation on the Khalkhin Gol using mechanized formations. For the Japanese political leadership, it became obvious that the level of readiness of their army to conduct a large-scale war with a strong enemy did not meet modern requirements. We made the right conclusions from the events at Khalkhin Gol. The Japanese were bogged down in a long war with China. Their grouping in Manchuria was not ready and did not have reserves for conducting broad offensive operations against the Soviet Union. In this regard, I want to emphasize that Stalin's principled decision to leave only troops in the Far East to cover the border and active defense was made even before the start of the Soviet-German war. The transfer of troops near Moscow in October 1941 was a logical, albeit forced, step

Soviet command.

The fact is that in addition to Sorge's reports, Stalin received other equally important data on the contradictory development of the situation in the Far East. We firmly knew that Japan had different interests of its own from Germany in the conflict with the USA, Britain and China. Without the neutrality of the Soviet Union in this confrontation, the Japanese could not realize their goals - to establish dominance in Asia. On July 16, 1941,

the NKVD resident in China, A. Panyushkin, reported to Moscow on the reaction of Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese government, to the fascist aggression against the USSR. It was pointed out that they were happy with this attack, this war, believing that Japan's turn against the Soviet Union would follow and she would be forced to stop active hostilities in China.

It should be noted that at the same time, Lochlen Carey, President Roosevelt's assistant for the Far East, was in China. Being a member of the secret apparatus of the US Communist Party, he, as a source of "Page", through a confidant of the leadership of the American Communist Party, our group leader Y. Golos, transmitted to the Soviet resident in New York "Luka" - Klarin (P. Pastelnyak) extremely important data on the situation in China and the prospects for a Japanese attack on the Soviet

Union. It was Carey who had the strongest influence on the formation of American policy to counter Japanese aggression in China and the Far East. At the same time, he relied on his colleague in tacit cooperation with the US Communist Party and with us, G. White (Kassir), who held a high position in the US Treasury Department and periodically prepared economic justifications for American measures regarding Japanese aggression in the Far East. It is interesting that this

information about the results of Carey's trip to Chuntsyn (through the NKVD from New York from Pastelnyak and from China from Panyushkin) coincided with the official notification of the Soviet Ambassador Umansky, who was summoned by US Deputy Secretary of State S. Welles and informed him that Japanese action against the Soviet Union is not ruled out. At the same time, immediately after Umansky's meeting with him, Soviet intelligence informed Stalin and Molotov that, according to information from President Roosevelt's inner circle,

"The Americans are not interested in getting involved in a war with Japan, that the president is very careful in imposing an embargo against Japan, because the sanctions can hit in such a way that the Japanese will be forced to move to Southeast Asia for oil, which will provoke a war." Receiving conflicting information from Shanghai, Chongtsyn and

Washington could not but alert the Soviet command. It was not easy to understand the dramatic events. For example, on July 11, 1941, the NKVD station in Shanghai reported very interesting data about the

actions of the Japanese authorities in China. So, in Shanghai, they warned that there should be no protests against the USSR on the part of the emigration, and if there were any, the Japanese authorities would take severe measures. The Germans were very unhappy with this. The report indicated that there was talk among the Japanese that Japan had already begun moving troops into Manchuria and northern China. There has been conflicting information here. On the one hand, about military preparations, and on the other hand, about suppressing rumors about the war. The leadership of the then China - Chiang Kai-shek and his entourage were extremely interested in provoking a war between Japan and the Soviet Union in the

summer and autumn of 1941. Stalin and Molotov were well aware of these steps taken by Chiang Kai-shek along the lines of the NKVD, since our agent Drug - V. Stenes, whose portrait is in the FSB museum, who at one time acted as the head of his foreign intelligence, regularly informed us about

these intentions of his.

I must note the merits of our decryption service at this critical moment. Western historian of the KGB Christopher Andrew does not particularly favor the Soviet cryptographic service. However, now both we and foreign authors admit that the NKVD has achieved great success in deciphering the materials of the correspondence of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, Turkish, Italian and Greek diplomatic missions in Moscow. A serious role in this regard was played by the fact that we read the diplomatic correspondence of the Italian embassy in Tokyo with its Foreign Ministry in Rome. After all, Italy at that time was an ally of Japan under the Anti-Comintern Pact.

I will add to this that through Carey we controlled the correspondence of Chiang Kai-shek (pseudonym "Segak") with the President of the United States throughout the war, which generally made it possible to draw correct conclusions about the development of the situation in the Far East. I still remember what a strong impression I was made by Carey's report to President Roosevelt on the situation in the Far East and China, which was sent to me for review, and later sent to Stalin and Molotov along with an assessment of documents and proposals for specific measures in the field of intelligence work. under diplomatic cover

in China. Almost simultaneously in September 1941, the Harbin and Tokyo residencies of the NKVD reported to the Center that a military action by Japan against the USSR, in view of the aggravation of relations with the USA and England, seemed unlikely. Our resident in Japan, G. Dolbin (Artem), reported that, according to the source of the Tokyo residency, the Economist, the most acute period, which was at the beginning of the German-Soviet war, has already passed ... With the critical relationship that Japan has with the United States, the leadership of the empire will keep peace with the USSR. It is significant that this information (which appeared during the successful Soviet-Japanese economic negotiations on the terms of the Japanese concessions on Sakhalin) was based on the statement of the Japanese Minister of Trade and Industry Sakonji at an official dinner on the occasion of the visit to Tokyo of the director of the Japanese concessions society on Sakhalin.

R. Sorge, in one of his last reports to the Center in mid-September 1941, also confirmed the actual refusal of the Japanese command to start a war with the Soviet Union in the near future. His message was especially impressive because he cited Invest (H. Otsaki, a prominent journalist and adviser to the Prime Minister of Japan) as a source. At the same time, the Harbin residency also reported to the Center that, according to

information received from employees of the Japanese military mission, Japan would not take offensive actions against the USSR until the spring of 1942. At the same time, it was noted that, according to Japanese military circles, by the spring of 1942 the Germans would

have a decisive success, and then Japan will begin military operations to establish a new order throughout Siberia. In this regard, emigrant circles were instructed to draw up a diagram of the state structure of Siberia, highlighting the boundaries of the national autonomous republics - Buryat-Mongolian, Altai, Yakutsk, etc. These reports should be considered in the context

of the circumstances of the confrontation between Japan, the USA and England in the Far East and in China. The Japanese, as it were, were

confirming with concrete steps their intentions to decisively oppose "Anglo-American imperialism" in Asia, which they secretly outlined to Stalin and Molotov in Moscow in April 1941. At the end of July of the same year, Japanese troops began to occupy strategically important points in Indochina. The US government announced an embargo on the supply of petroleum products to Japan and banned Japanese ships from using the Panama Canal. In response to these actions, the Japanese telegraph agency Domei reported on August

8 "that, contrary to various rumors, there have been no changes in Soviet-Japanese relations since the signing of the neutrality pact." This statement was directly addressed to the Soviet government. On August 23, Japanese Foreign Minister Toyoda confirmed this to our Ambassador Smetanin, despite the official note from the Japanese authorities that the transportation of military materials from the United States to Vladivostok created a difficult situation for Japan. In turn, TASS denied the report of Japanese newspapers about active Soviet-Chinese consultations on repelling the actions of the Japanese army in Central China. Behind the scenes, however, were secret consultations between Soviet Ambassador to Japan K. Smetanin and the Japanese Minister of

Foreign Affairs. It was reported to the Kremlin both through the Soviet embassy and through our residency that the Japanese leadership insisted on the confirmation by the Soviet side of its obligations to maintain neutrality and prevent the Soviet Union from providing its territory for military bases to other countries, which could be used in case of aggravation of the situation in asian vs

Japan's interests. I will especially emphasize that Molotov instructed our ambassador in Tokyo in August, when Japanese-American relations deteriorated and when our cooperation with the Anglo-American allies in the war against Hitler became obvious, to resolutely confirm on behalf of the Soviet leadership that "the USSR remains true to its obligations regarding the Neutrality Pact and will not enter into an agreement with a third party directed against Japan." Allegorically, this meant that in secret

consultations with Tokyo, Moscow gave the Japanese side complete freedom of action in Indochina. Therefore, during the critical period of

the battle near Moscow, on October 15, negotiations between Mongolia and the Japanese satellite of Manchukuo were successfully completed in Harbin to clarify the borders and the relevant documents were signed. At the same time, Japan, although it began negotiations with the United States on the delimitation of spheres of influence in the Far East and Asia, at the same time actively continued occupation activities in Indochina.

The inconsistency of information coming from the Far East required special attention. In September-October 1941, the Special Group headed by me continued to work out possible measures in connection with the threat of the outbreak of hostilities in the Far East. Both the Kremlin and the NKVD, despite secret consultations with Tokyo, did not entertain illusions about the aggressiveness of the Japanese, "directed primarily against Western imperialism." Fortunately, by this time, the head of the eastern branch of the INO M. Yarikov was released from prison on the initiative of Eitingon. V. Pudovkin, who slandered him and Shpigelglaz in

1939, simultaneously questioned the sources of the INO-OGPU-NKVD in Manchuria, Japan and Korea. Yarikov, a week after his release at the end of September, along with me, was called to the carpet to Beria, who bluntly said that "our heads will fly first if the materials obtained by the old agents from exile in Harbin, Shanghai and Tokyo about the plans of the Kwantung Army turn into disinformation". Beria had every reason to threaten. Eight of the twelve NKVD and military intelligence stations in China and Japan

Pudin in 1939 prepared the conclusion that their employees are "twins" of the German, British, American, Japanese and Chinese intelligence services.

Yarikov adequately answered the people's commissar that he vouches for his sources, as they were before January 1939, that is, before his arrest, offering to specifically check them in reconnaissance reconnaissance actions on the border with Manchuria. Which was done under the leadership of the head of the Primorsky NKVD M. Gvishiani.

Nevertheless, we could not completely rule out the possibility of a strike in the back by the Japanese in the Far East, although it was obvious that the Japanese army did not carry out measures in October-November to create strike groups for offensive operations against Soviet troops in Primorye.

Indicative in this regard was the fact that the main forces of the Japanese ground forces and aviation were not deployed in the fortified areas in the immediate vicinity of the Soviet borders. However, the situation on the border as a whole remained tense. The provocative reconnaissance searches of the Japanese troops along our entire border with Manchuria greatly unnerved both the command of the Soviet troops in the Far East and the Headquarters. It is necessary

to clarify a very important circumstance. I have already said that in no case did we set before our proxies and agents in the US presidential administration, the State Department and the Treasury the task of exacerbating Japanese-American relations and provoking a war between Tokyo and Washington. Our line in working with these people corresponded to the line of the Comintern - to use the available opportunities to influence the American leadership so that its "pressure" on Japan would hinder and exclude the military action of Japanese imperialism against the USSR in the conditions of the German-Soviet war.

In fact, the American government has taken a tough position towards Japan to contain the expansion of its aggression in Southeast Asia. At the same time, it primarily defended its own interests in a well-known note transmitted by US Secretary of State Hull to the Japanese representatives in Washington on November 26, 1941.

It is now argued that since G. White, a member of the secret staff of the US Communist Party, the Silvermaster circle, prepared this note unacceptable to the Japanese, the latter received an excuse for a surprise attack on America. In reality, the note from the US State Department only recorded the beginning of an open confrontation. Even before it was handed over, the American government announced its intention to send its troops and fleet outside the Philippines, to the Dutch possessions - Indonesia in order to ensure the defense of the significant reserves of raw materials and strategically important minerals located there. Indonesia, as you know, was one of the main targets of Japan's aggression.

Even without the recommendations of Carey and White, the American ruling circles were well aware that economic pressure measures, the sequestration of Japanese funds, and the denunciation of trade agreements in July-August did not stop the Japanese occupation of strategically important points in southern Indochina. It was clear to everyone that the Japanese fleet and army were preparing for a decisive thrust with the aim of capturing American, British and Dutch possessions in the Pacific.

At the same time, the crushing blow of the Japanese precisely on Pearl Harbor, the main forces of the US Navy in the Pacific Ocean, turned out to be a complete surprise for the allies and the Soviet command. Although the approach of war in the Pacific theater of operations, one might say, was in the air. It is significant that both the American and our decryption services intercepted and deciphered almost simultaneously on November 27, 1941, a telegram from the Japanese Foreign Ministry dated November 24, 1941 to the Japanese embassy in Berlin, which, in essence, announced the imminent start of hostilities. The interception of this telegram was reported to Beria from Kuibyshev, in my opinion, immediately.

Another thing is interesting. The Kremlin was informed about the future outbreak of hostilities not only through intelligence channels. The most serious data came through diplomatic channels. Being at a reception with Beria in late November or early December, I was surprised to accept his remark, reporting on the plan agreed with Gvishiani for the deployment of an agent-sabotage apparatus in the Far East. "Put these things aside," he said, "to fight the Japanese

we, apparently, will not have to in the next six months. Artyom reports and Molotov confirmed to me that the Japanese and I managed to agree on maintaining neutrality through diplomatic channels.

Indeed, from the documents now available, it follows that on November 22, 1941, when the Japanese squadron completed its concentration at the starting point, Japanese Foreign Minister Togo summoned the Soviet ambassador K. Smetanin and demanded to confirm the assurances of the Soviet government of August 13 that it, observing the pact of neutrality, will not enter into an agreement with a third party directed against Japan. Smetanin responded positively to Togo on this issue three times.

November 28 Smetanin, having received instructions from Moscow, once again confirmed the position of the Soviet government on neutrality. At this time, the Japanese squadron had been secretly moving towards Pearl Harbor for three days. But what is especially significant is that the approximate date of my report to Beria coincides with a special visit, on the instructions of Moscow, of our ambassador Smetanin to the Japanese Foreign Ministry - December 1, 1941. The Kremlin was fully aware that Japan was preparing a military action against the United States, and instructed Smetanin to once again state that "the USSR does not intend to violate the Neutrality Pact, provided that Japan also observes the obligations of the Neutrality Pact with

the Soviet Union." Japan's attack on the United States and England on December 7, 1941, followed by Germany's declaration of war on the United States on December 11, radically changed the entire world situation and the prospects for a war against

German and Japanese fascism. I want to emphasize that the Pacific War unleashed by Japan was not provoked by the Soviet Union or our intelligence. On closer examination, the assertions are naive and simplistic that the recommendations of our agents and trusted people in the United States or the Sorge group in Japan pushed the ruling circles of these countries to a military confrontation.

The decisive role in unleashing the war in this region was played by the cardinal interests of states in asserting their geopolitical and economic influence in the world. At the same time, Stalin repaid our allies, who then, at a critical moment in the war between the Soviet Union and Hitler, mainly

a benevolent and observant position in relation to the USSR, an extremely effective reconnaissance and diplomatic maneuver. He managed to turn the nascent anti-Hitler coalition into a real military-political and economic force in the fight against fascist aggression. Our diplomatic relations with the United States have been

raised to a new, higher level. It is significant that the former People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, M. Litvinov, who was appointed our ambassador to the United States on November 10, 1941, was simultaneously appointed Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs on November 14. In this regard, I cannot fail to say that M. Litvinov arrived in Washington on the day the war in the Pacific began at the same time as the chief NKVD resident for the Americas, V. Zarubin, who was appointed there.

Soviet diplomacy and intelligence played a significant role in this action of the leadership of our state. The threat of a war on two fronts against the Soviet Union, which haunted us in the 1930s and 1940s, after Hitler came to power and the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, was averted. This also laid an important prerequisite for the coming victory of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War.